

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 201 189

FL 012 200

TITLE Al-Manakh. Language Centre Journal, Volume 5, Number 1.
 INSTITUTION Kuwait Univ., Safat. Language Center.
 PUB DATE Jan 81
 NOTE 101p.
 JOURNAL CIT Al-Manakh; v5 n1 Jan 1981
 EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS Business Administration Education; Chemistry: Course Descriptions; Databases; *English for Special Purposes; Higher Education; Learning Problems; Test Items; Textbooks

ABSTRACT

This journal for teachers of English as a second language (ESL) to science and engineering students at the university level includes the following articles: (1) "Conversation Piece" by Maria Al-Salem; (2) "Writing a Chemistry Laboratory Report" by Noel Simon; (3) "A Behavioural Summary of a General English Syllabus Content for False Beginners" by Mark Calderbank; (4) "The Use of Student Lectures in an ESP Writing Course" by Maureen O'Brien; (5) "English for Specific Purposes, Aston 1980" by Andrew E. Seymour; (6) "Multi-Purpose Texts for Advanced Students of Business Studies" by Catriona Roberts; and (7) "Creating an Item Bank" by Victor Mason. (JB)

 * Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
 * from the original document. *

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

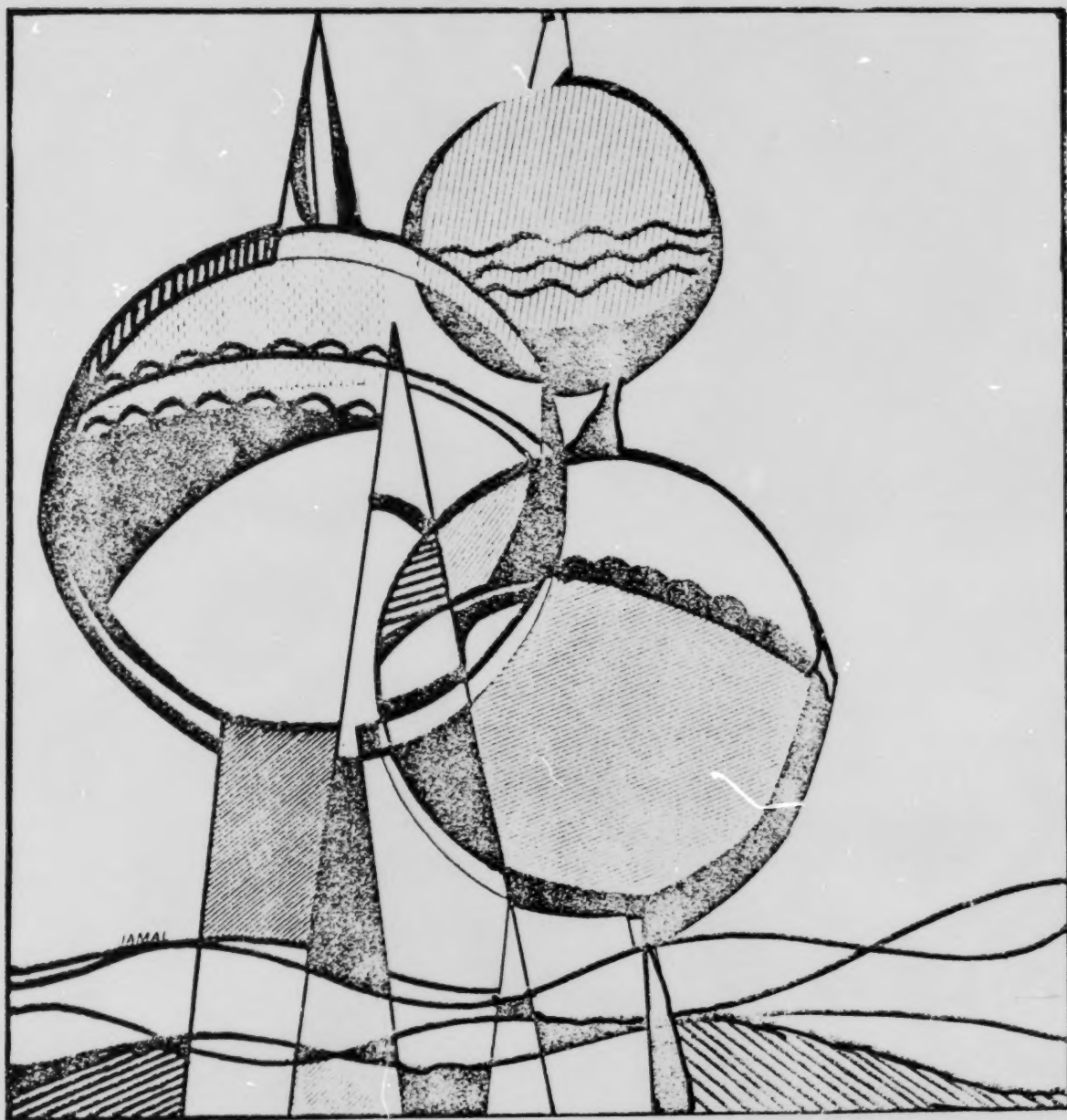
"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Univ. of Kuwait

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."



AL-MANAKH



VOL 5 NO.1
January 1981

Language Centre Journal
University of Kuwait

ED201189

FL 012 200

VOLUME 5 NO 1
JANUARY 1981

AL-MAVAHI
JOURNAL OF THE LANGUAGE CENTRE
PO BOX 5486
THE UNIVERSITY
KUWAIT

<u>C O N T E N T S</u>	<u>P A G E</u>
EDITORIAL	1
CONVERSATION PIECE	3
Dr. Maria Al-Salem Department of English	
WRITING A CHEMISTRY LABORATORY REPORT	10
Noel Simon ELU Engineering	
A BEHAVIOURAL SUMMARY OF A GENERAL ENGLISH SYLLABUS CONTENT FOR FALSE BEGINNERS	15
Mark Calderbank ELU Law	
THE USE OF STUDENT LECTURES IN AN ESP WRITING COURSE	36
Maureen O'Brien ELU Engineering	
ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES, ASTON 1980 ...	41
Andrew E. Seymour MSSD, Faculty of Medicine	

MULTI-PURPOSE TEXTS FOR ADVANCED STUDENTS OF BUSINESS STUDIES	61
Catriona Roberts ELU Commerce	
CREATING AN ITEM BANK	73
Victor Mason Tests & Measurement Office	
ANNOUNCEMENTS	87

Editor : Edward Richards

Editorial Committee : Jonathan Elliman

Gayle Secretan

Andrew Seymour

Secretary : Mohamed Aslam

EDITORIAL

The contents of this issue reflect, yet again, the diversity of interests and tasks undertaken by the ELUs which comprise the Language Centre. ELU Law is represented for the first time by an article showing that EST does not have the monopoly on curriculum and syllabus design. There are practical articles from ELUs Commerce and Engineering, and from the Tests and Measurement Office. A fairly comprehensive report on the ESP course at Aston also appears, and we hope to publish a report on the British Council's Communicative Testing Course in our next issue.

It is encouraging to note that the University is finally demanding much higher standards in English from its graduates in those fields where a high level of English is required in business and industry in the "real world". This, naturally, aids ELUs in planning much tighter programmes. In addition we are beginning to see a greater interest being shown by the Faculties as to what actually goes into the relevant English courses. ELU Engineering has a long history of co-operation with the Faculty; ELU Science has been forging links for some time. ELU Commerce report recent co-operation with the faculty which will culminate in the ELU offering a new elective 209 "Advanced Academic Skills in Business Studies", which may become a required course for students wishing to follow future Commerce courses taught in English. ELU Law offers a new course in February, designed by the staff in co-operation with the Faculty of Law, and wholly produced by members of staff. This will be a course in English for Academic Legal Purposes. All courses offered by ELU Arts are now on a 5 hour a week basis, and as from September there will be 2 pre-credit courses, 098 and 099, leading to a new credit programme.

In Volume 2, No.1, of Al-Manakh, Dr. Yahya El-Ezabi (then Director of the Language Centre) noted that

"..... the University and the Centre can be rightly proud to have among their ranks such a highly qualified and dedicated group of teachers." Such a description of the staff of the Language Centre is no less valid today than it was 3 years ago, and Al-Manakh is a manifestation of that dedication and professionalism. The pride of the University in this group of teachers is still, however, not commensurate with the status accorded by the University to the Language Centre as a whole.

E. Richards
Editor.

CONVERSATION PIECE

BY DR. MARIA AL-SALEM
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Being a dedicated and hardy breed, language teachers do not admit that the profession can sometimes be, well, boring. Not terminally, perhaps, but enough to bring one to the point where certain mistakes begin to sound quite correct. There seems to be an unspoken agreement NOT TO KNOW, rather like the attitude people take to the neighbor's ugly baby. Yet it is true that serious communication is hampered if one of the parties involved has a less than adequate grasp of the language. Furthermore, honesty would force a less hardy and dedicated soul to admit that oral drills and subject-verb agreement are not intrinsically fascinating or conducive to the profound meeting of minds.

The pleasure of language teaching seems to come when some basic grasp of the language is achieved and we can all proceed to do things in English. There is obviously a difference between teaching, say, History in English and teaching English in English. Whereas in the former case, language is a means to an end, in the latter, language is both the means and the end.

Recognizing this problem, Longman's, in conjunction with the BBC and the German State television network developed a program called Challenges - a Multimedia Approach some years ago. The basic idea of the program was to treat English as a medium of instruction for topics relevant to high school students' own lives and experiences. Thus the acquisition of English language skills was not stressed as a primary focus of the course, but rather as something to be acquired naturally in the process of learning something else.

In a sense, this is a logical development of pedagogical trends in language teaching. In what is now recognized as the bad old days of grammar rules and verb declension, instructors would teach about the language, after which, fiat lux, it was recognized that one should teach the language, not about it. The latest addition to the pantheon is the proposition that one can teach something in English and the student will somehow acquire both the language and subject matter. Certainly this method would accelerate the learning process.

The stated aim of the Longman project was "... to stimulate students into using English for communicative tasks which have direct relation to their own ideas and needs. Side by side with the development and practice of linguistic skills, however, the project aims to develop the students' ability to handle ideas and to develop their own self and social awareness." The project relied heavily on AVA aids and task-oriented materials which required intensive student involvement.

The 6 categories presented for discussion were:

1. Someone to love
2. Somewhere to work
3. Somewhere to live
4. Something to say
5. Something to do
6. Somewhere to go

Among the many positive features of the program was its high appeal to students who found it relevant to the "real" world. Teachers felt that it was a significant improvement over traditional "conversation classes", where student shyness combined with contrived situational formats usually reduced the conversation to stilted speeches or teacher monologues.

Although it may be too early to measure the effectiveness of the method, there are indications that such an approach may well become standard procedure. Certain

schools in California have implemented the idea in teaching Spanish to elementary children. The program was not as sophisticated as Longman's format; they simply followed the standard curriculum - but in Spanish. The pilot programs reported significant levels of success, to the point where children never before exposed to Spanish would answer in Spanish to questions posed in English by the end of the program.

Psychologists have long held that children can learn any number of languages, especially if they consistently associate one particular language with one person. There is ample evidence of this in a cosmopolitan community, where a child may speak Arabic with his father, Italian with his mother and English with his teachers and friends. There is no reason therefore that a native speaker of Arabic could not conceivably learn English by participating in general English medium instruction. The problem arises with older children because language acquisition ability decreases with age.

The Longman program addresses this problem by presenting topics of specific interest to the high school age group. Another possible approach might be to instruct students in English on topics with which they are already well acquainted, i.e., Arabic history or Islam.

The sciences would seem to be another likely choice, since formulae, or the chemical symbol for sulphur, for example, are universal. Math problems or basic logic would develop reasoning ability and still incorporate necessary concepts of English. In appendix 1, a math problem of 3 unknowns is presented. In asking students to explain the problem and their solutions, the teacher would cover "how" and "if" questions, weigh/weight exercises, singular and plural agreement, etc. Responses might include: If 2 pears and 1 bunch of grapes weigh 50 grams and 2 bunches of grapes and 1 banana weigh 50 grams, how much do the grapes weigh? How much does the banana weigh? What is the weight of 1 pear? etc.

Readings of general interest, including news items, can generate classroom discussion with the use of carefully prepared questions which help the student to read between the lines. The ability to recognize implicit information can be taught in stages, beginning with sentences and proceeding to full length texts.

The text presented in appendix 2 has been abridged for the purposes of illustration here. Students are given a text and asked to read it carefully. The statements following the text represent a range of choices; true, probable, possible, unlikely, false. The 5 choices might be presented graphically:

<u>True</u>	<u>probable</u>	<u>possible</u>	<u>unlikely</u>	<u>false</u>
10	8	5	2	0

This is a variation of the classic true-table test, with the addition of 3 more problematic choices. The point of the exercise is not to pass judgement on the students' accuracy, but rather to encourage their deductive reasoning. Apropos of question 5, for example some students may be aware of Holland's long experience with dams and dikes, others may not. To repeat, accuracy is not the primary consideration of the exercise; the student's ability to explain and defend his point of view is.

Learning games in general are very useful for this particular approach to teaching language because they are task-oriented. Strip stories are deservedly popular for conversation practice, while simultaneously teaching paragraph order. Crossword puzzles can be useful in teaching vocabulary, from simple clues (synonyms) to complex, extrapolated ones being subject specific, or dependent on problem solving (see appendix 3).

Whether one uses learning games or a total package of material taught in English, it seems that teaching something in English facilitates teaching English. It is conversation productive, it develops students' ability to deduce facts and draw conclusions and it is process oriented rather than answer oriented. And, inshallah, it is not so boring.

10

No. 1

$$\text{apple} + \text{apple} + \text{orange} = 50\text{g}$$

$$\text{apple} + \text{orange} + \text{orange} = 50\text{g}$$

$$\text{apple} + \text{apple} + \text{apple} = 80\text{g}$$

1 - Considering the total amount given,
how much does each piece of fruit weigh?

No. 2

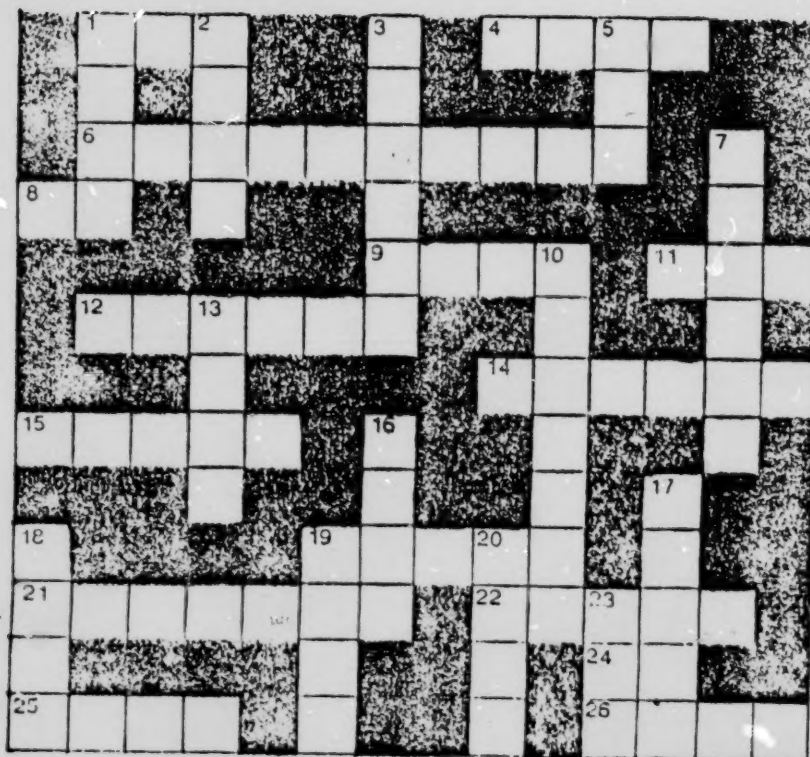
Sir William Garstin first proposed the project in 1902. Some 72 years later, the plan to build a canal around the Sudd Swamp was finally approved. Egypt and Sudan plan to divide the water and the cost of the canal, which will significantly decrease the evaporation of the Nile's water in the 12,000 mile Swamp. The Jongle i Canal is expected to be completed in 1985. It is being built by French engineers and Dutch designers, with financing from Arab bankers. Some scientists, however, fear it will disturb the pattern of wildlife migration and that the price of development is too high.

ANSWER & EXPLAIN:

True - probable - possible - unlikely - false

- _____ 1. Sir William Garstin was Dutch.
- _____ 2. The canal was approved in 1974.
- _____ 3. The British bid to build the canal was too high.
- _____ 4. The canal is supervised by Arab bankers.
- _____ 5. The Dutch were asked to design the canal
because they have good relations with the Arabs.

- _____ 6. The canal is named after Sir William.
- _____ 7. The canal will alter the lives of the fisherman.
- _____ 8. Scientists are worried about the effect on wildlife.
- _____ 9. The canal will be half way between Egypt and Sudan.
- _____ 10. Egypt and the Sudan are building the canal primarily to reclaim land.
- _____ 11. Sir William is advising the construction crew.
- _____ 12. The canal will be 12,000 miles long.
- _____ 13. Much of the Nile's water is lost in the swamp.
- _____ 14. Evaporation occurs because the swamp is relatively shallow.
- _____ 15. Egypt and the Sudan will have to pay the banks in 1985.
- _____ 16. French engineers have built other dams for Egypt.
- _____ 17. Egypt's development projects depend on water.
- _____ 18. The dam will provide navigation facilities.



ACROSS

1. "_____ do you do? My name is Charles".
4. Moslems _____ five times a day.
6. "Haj"
8. Please tell _____ about your religion.
9. The third duty is to _____ the poor.
11. Not young.
12. The end of the day.
14. Ahmad doesn't eat pork. He's a _____.
15. The pilgrims _____ seven small stones.
19. Ahmad and Charles are travelling on the same _____.
21. Moslems must not drink it.
22. One hill is called Safa. The _____ hill is called Al Marwa.
24. Pilgrimage means the same _____ Haj.
25. "Are you an _____?" "Of course: I'm Kuwaiti."
26. "Excuse me: Is this _____ taken?"

DOWN

1. "_____ you have a nice time in Kuala Lumpur."
2. "Zamzam" is the name of a _____.
3. _____ 746 to Kuala Lumpur arrives at 7 p.m.
5. How old are you?
7. The pilgrim spends the night at a place _____ Muzdellfah.
10. The _____ Mohammed (Peace be upon him)
13. 12 o'clock (not midnight)
16. In Mina the pilgrims _____ a sheep or a goat.
17. This book. Plural: _____ books.
18. A small hill in Mecca.
19. He has very little money. He is _____.
20. The pilgrim stands at Mount Arafat from _____ until sunset.
23. Ahmad _____ a house in Jakarta.

(Courtesy of Mr. Alan Rush)

WRITING A CHEMISTRY LABORATORY REPORT

By NOEL SIMON
ELU - ENGINEERING

Course 121 is a credit course (for 3 hours a week) in the English Language Programme at the Faculty of Engineering, and aims at covering aspects of technical writing at the paragraph level. The TQEFIL rating of the students is in the 450 to 500 point range.

Part of 121 consists of the writing of two laboratory reports, one in physics and the other in chemistry. As there are some essential differences in format between them, I shall discuss only the chemistry lab. report - indeed only one such type, which we have chosen for reasons that I shall state later in this article.

On Day 1, the students are given an instruction sheet of the following type in class. They may also be given a quick demonstration to illustrate new words, e.g. "precipitate." This introduction takes about 10 minutes.

Teaching Text 1

Chemistry Laboratory Assignment: Instruction Sheet

In the laboratory, you will be provided with 4 numbered beakers containing the following colourless solutions:

sodium	carbonate
barium	chloride
sodium	sulphate
potassium	chloride

You will NOT be told the actual solution in each beaker.

Using red litmus paper but NO OTHER CHEMICALS, you are required to identify the solution in each beaker. Test-tubes and tap water will be provided. Use the following information in carrying out your investigation.

- i) When a solution containing barium is added to a solution containing sulphate, a white precipitate is produced.
- ii) When a solution containing barium is added to a solution containing carbonate, a white precipitate is produced.
- iii) A solution containing carbonate changes the colour of litmus from red to blue.

BEFORE YOU COME TO THE LABORATORY

You should devise a scheme for identifying the solutions.

Using the information given in Teaching Text 1, there is only one logical sequence for solving the problem (the reader is invited to take a try!).

On Day 2, the students go to the laboratory to carry out the experiment, using their schemes. With a succession of classes, the laboratory assistant may wish to reduce cheating by rotating the numbers on the beakers, so that for example number 2 may be sodium carbonate for one class but barium chloride for the next class.

On Day 3, the students return to the class-room with their results and are given a sheet instructing them on how to write their report. A sample follows.

Teaching Text 2

Chemistry Laboratory Assignment: Writing your Report

Use the following headings (instructions are given in parentheses)

PURPOSE: To identify

APPARATUS and CHEMICALS: (List everything you were provided with)

PROCEDURE: (Use any forms of the Past Tense that you need. Refer to each unknown solution(s) by its number, e.g. s1, s4, etc.)

RESULTS: (Summarise your results in a table as follows:)

Experiment	Observation	Inference
(what was <u>done</u>)	(what was <u>seen</u>)	(what was <u>deduced</u> or <u>concluded</u>)

PRECAUTIONS: (Mention points of special care that were required)

The final report should look something like the following "model", which is used for reference by 121 teachers when grading the students' reports.

Teaching Text 3

Chemistry Laboratory Assignment: A Suggested Answer

PURPOSE: To identify 4 known colourless solutions in unmarked containers, using red litmus paper only.

APPARATUS and CHEMICALS:

4 numbered beakers containing the following solutions:

- sodium carbonate
- barium chloride
- sodium sulphate
- potassium chloride
- 1 rack of test-tubes
- 1 piece of red litmus paper

PROCEDURE: Pieces of red litmus paper were dipped into each of the solutions. The litmus turned blue in solution 2 (s2), so this solution was sodium carbonate.

A little of the remaining 3 solutions was taken in separate test-tubes, and some of the sodium carbonate was added to each one. A white precipitate was produced with s4, therefore this solution was barium chloride.

A little of the remaining 2 solutions was taken in separate test-tubes, and some of the barium chloride was added to each one. A white precipitate was produced with s1, therefore this solution was sodium sulphate.

The remaining solution was therefore potassium chloride.

RESULTS:

Experiment	Observation	Inference
i) Test with red litmus	s2 turned litmus blue	s2 was <u>sodium carbonate</u>
ii) Test s1, s3, s4 with sodium carbonate (s2)	s4 produced white precipitate	s4 was <u>barium chloride</u>
iii) Test s1, s3 with barium chloride (s4)	s1 produced white precipitate	s1 was <u>sodium sulphate</u> s3 was <u>potassium chloride</u>

- PRECAUTIONS:
- i) The test-tubes should be cleaned before re-using.
 - ii) Each piece of litmus paper should be used only once, so that the solutions remain clean/are not contaminated.

Some advantages in this kind of exercise are:

- 1) It employs genuine scientific method in a manner which is challenging to the students. This includes working out a theory and then putting it into practice.
- 2) It is easy for the scientist (or non-scientist) to set up, for the students to perform and for the English teacher to mark.
- 3) It lends itself to adaptation as a written examination question. The students then write the equivalent of the "Procedure" only, using the Present and Present Passive, e.g. "Pieces of the litmus paper are dipped....." etc.

A BEHAVIOURAL SUMMARY OF A GENERAL ENGLISH SYLLABUS CONTENT FOR FALSE BEGINNERS

BY MARK CALDERBANK
ELU - LAW

There are two possible applications for a summary of the kind presented below: it could form part of a statement of behavioural objectives or the basis for the design of a syllabus content. In theory, it should form both, the second proceeding logically from the first. In practice, this is seldom the case in General English programmes, especially where a 'globally oriented' coursebook has been chosen as the basis of the course. I feel, therefore, it would be advisable to assume an audience of sceptics and to indulge in a little initial propaganda.

I. THE RATIONALE

I shall argue first that such a behavioural summary can help to achieve a measure of independence from textbooks; second, that a commitment to behavioural objectives presupposes a summary drawn up in notional and communicative terms; and third, that such an approach is particularly relevant in programme co-ordination.

The first objection to be overcome concerns the use of globally designed coursebooks. A statement of behavioural objectives should be an a priori of syllabus design. In practice, it frequently turns out to be a posteriori summary of the coursebook in use. In such circumstances one might forgivably be sceptical about the value of a statement of behavioural objectives. I would argue, however, that it is precisely when a textbook forms the basis of a course's materials that it is necessary to be

clear about one's objectives; otherwise one is absolutely at the mercy of the coursebook. And if the book goes out of print, or a new batch of teachers decide they don't like it, you have neither a course nor even a standard for evaluating one. You have no choice but to try another readily available coursebook and hope it's better than the last.

To correct one oversimplification: in practice, although the coursebook is the "basic fare" we give our students, we also write "supplementary" materials. The term "supplementary" presupposes two things : first, that the coursebook is indeed regarded as basic; secondly, that it is in some way incomplete or inadequate. Rather obviously, the less satisfactory the book, the more supplementary materials have to be written. Equally obviously, the less satisfactory the book, the more likely it is to be thrown out after a semester or two. Now, in the absence of a statement of syllabus content independent of the coursebook, the materials are going to have been based on the coursebook in terms of both the content (lexical as well as structural) of each unit and the sequencing of those units. Result: dust bins full of xeroxed copies of supplementary materials which have taken hundreds of hours to produce.

There is therefore a strong argument in favour of an independently stated linguistic course content against which coursebooks can be evaluated and which can be the framework for materials created by the teaching unit. There is no reason why one should teach the whole of a book. It is the book which should be supplementary, not the in-house materials.

This is easy to say, less easy to do. In ESP courses, it is normally possible to arrive at a statement of course objectives and then of syllabus content because one knows at least the purpose of learning the language, usually academic or occupational and quite often the

terminal behaviour required of the learner. In General English programmes, where these are not given, one has to proceed by trial and error. The coursebook can indeed provide the first framework for a summary of syllabus content - if it is reasonably suitable. In the present case, the original statement was prepared in this way. I was lucky to be using a book, Kernel One by Robert O'Neill (Longman) which integrated semantic and grammatical material so well that it was not difficult to analyse the textual material to produce a categorization of the kind shown below, where the fundamental categories are notional and functional but directly related to their grammatical realizations and exponents. The next step, an obvious one is to modify, change, delete, or add in the light of one's experience in teaching the course.

The next stage, an essential one if one is to arrive at an independent view of a potential course content, is to go through a global taxonomy which has been categorised in notional and functional terms, for instance Wilkins (1976). Since my model is largely based on Wilkins, it may be enlightening to give an outline of his classification system here, which the reader can fill out by examining Column 1 of my model, bearing in mind that this represents only a fraction of the data in Wilkins and that certain alterations have been made.

The fundamental point about a notional and/or functional approach to syllabus design, of which Wilkins' is one of the first examples, is that we are primarily interested in what speakers express through language rather than how they express it. The taxonomy is therefore categorised in terms of content (or meaning) rather than form (i.e. Column One of my model, not Column Two).

Wilkins distinguishes three types of meaning:-

1. Semantico-grammatical (roughly equivalent to 'notional' ... "our perceptions of events, processes, states, and abstractions in general it is the type of meaning that is expressed through grammatical systems in different languages." (p.22)

2. Modal: the (simultaneous) expression of the speaker's attitude towards what he is saying. Compare

- (1) It 's 6 o'clock
- (2) I'm afraid it's 6 o'clock

(1) is an objective statement about the notion of TIME - or to be more precise: POINT IN TIME. (2) expresses the same notion but also the speaker's attitude to it.

3. Communicative function. The difference between

- (1) It's 6 o'clock
- and
- (3) Is it 6 o'clock?

has nothing to do with the information contained in the utterance; nor does the speaker express an attitude. The difference lies in the use the language is being put to (i.e. its function); (1) is a statement while (3) is a question. Language being a system of communication, it is obvious that one cannot imagine any utterance that has no communicative function.

It is not true, therefore, that any utterance expresses only one of these three types of meaning; on the contrary, many an utterance expresses all three simultaneously and most express both a notion and a function; only expressions which are meaningful exclusively in relation to the context in which they occur are purely functional (Type 3 only - see Part 3 of the model, categories 3-7, Col. 2). It is important to bear this in mind when studying the model.

A further example will clarify the above and also show how these three types of meaning are classified into different notions and functions:-

- (4) I saw a no.39 bus, slapped a £1 note on the cafe table, and rushed out.

This utterance expresses the notions (semantico-grammatical categories), of PAST TIME and SEQUENCE (et alia) and performs a NARRATIVE function.

If we wish to carry this further (as I do in the model), we may note that the notions are realized by certain forms and exponents: respectively, PAST TENSE and AND.

The connection between the semantics and the grammar is therefore close, so close "that it is feasible to approach decisions about grammatical forms to be taught through semantics" (Wilkins, p.22). There are, however, two important reservations: first, it is important to look through the right end of the telescope. It is certainly true, for instance, that the ability to narrate assumes knowledge of past tense forms and sequential co-ordinators; it is not true that a knowledge of past tense forms and sequential co-ordinators presupposes the ability to narrate. Secondly, there is no one-to-one equivalence of semantic and grammatical units (as (4) above might misleadingly suggest). "The fact is that sentences are not confined in use to the function suggested by the grammatical labels that we give to them, nor does one use of language require the selection of one particular grammatical form." (p.10)

To sum up the advantages of referring to a global taxonomy of notions, modality, and functions as expressed through language:-

1. It takes your mind right away from the restricted language of the coursebook onto the vast panorama of the meaning potential of language and yet permits a rigorous, fastidious, and free selection of language content.

2. It permits selection of a syllabus content with a view to predicting actual language behaviour.
3. It permits not only the selection of content but also of the forms which express that content (rather than encouraging the selection of content merely to exemplify the forms).

What choices you will make (and your selection will represent only a minute fraction of the meaning potential of the language) will depend, in the absence of terminal objectives, on your knowledge of students' actual performative ability and communicative deficiencies. But the choice must be free. Only then can you gauge what role the coursebook can play in achieving your revised objectives, only then can you make the right decision about the "what" and "how" of materials creation.

The categories used for stating a syllabus content are therefore crucial. I do not envisage, for example, how the process I have just described is possible using a system of grammatical classification because there are no behavioural criteria inherent in such a system, whereas a notional/functional approach is able to select appropriate grammatical forms in the light of pre-selected behavioural criteria. Furthermore, the difference in the way objectives are expressed is psychologically important for the teacher, especially where the syllabus content is itemised, as it normally is in General English courses at the lower levels. To my mind, there is a difference between being asked to teach students to ask permission, or to express a degree of certainty about an event, and being asked to teach 'modal verbs'. Also I believe the model outlined below gives a more measurable assessment of achievement, of what students should be able to perform at the end of the course that they could not perform at the beginning. This again, is psychologically important to the teacher.

My second argument concerns the validity or non-validity of the statement of behavioural objectives itself. A typical

statement for a General English course may indicate desired student performance in the four macro-skills and present an inventory of grammatical and lexical items to indicate the 'linguistic limits' within which students are expected to perform. If this statement really means what it says: i.e. that the 'structural limits' are no more than that and that what we are concerned with is measuring skills, then I have no quarrel with it. Where, however, there is a built-in assumption that the ability to recognize and produce a finite number of structures in isolation presupposes the ability to recognize or produce authentic communications within those same limits, there is a credibility gap. This scepticism is supported not only by empirical observation, but by the nature of language itself. There is a lack of equivalence, for instance, between the logical organization of time and the grammatical organization of tense, or between communicative and grammatical categories.

This is one reason why students can perform adequately on tests of itemised grammatical points but fail to recover those same structures in spontaneous speech or writing. If the syllabus content, as well as the desired abilities, was stated behaviourally, it would be easier to envisage how those abilities might be promoted.

Secondly, where the itemised structural inventory itself is regarded as part of the examinable syllabus, rather than merely a framework within which communicative abilities are tested, then the objectives stated for that part of the course are simply not behavioural. For instance, transforming declarative sentences into interrogative ones may be a perfectly laudable objective in certain circumstances, but it is not 'behavioural' because ('echo' questions apart) it in no way corresponds to normal behaviour in the target language.

Very often, therefore, a statement of behavioural objectives seems to require a classification in notional/communicative terms as a *sine qua non*.

The model outlined below would be suitable for a single semester course of 50-60 hours, and what I have said so far is directed at teachers, testers, co-ordinators, and designers of such courses. When we consider the design of a complete programme over two or more courses, the advantage of using this kind of categorization is even more clear. First, because the same categories are relevant to most levels of a General English course, the programme can more easily be envisaged as a whole and it is easier to co-ordinate the various course levels; for the same reason, the learning process is cyclical, in contrast to the linear progression of a grammatical syllabus; reinforcement of grammatical patterns can, therefore be built into the syllabus in a more creative way. Thirdly, it is easier to relate intermediate objectives to terminal ones because all objectives are necessarily behavioural. Finally the notional design, being far more flexible, is probably less wasteful of students' time. In particular it distinguishes more clearly between the kind of language we use in speech and the kind we use in writing. This flexibility is particularly significant in programmes of relatively short duration.

II. THE COURSE

1. Context

The course for which this model has been (theoretically) drawn up is O99 Law, a remedial course for False Beginners. Students on this course have therefore already studied English at school, sometimes for as much as eight years, following a grammatical syllabus. (The OUP CRESCENT series, a communicative course, has been introduced into Kuwaiti schools and is now fully operational at the intermediate level.) Students reaching the required standard in O99 will go on to take 2 credit courses of one semester each, continuing with General English (Courses 151 & 152). The grammatical content of 151 will be almost wholly, and that of 152 at least partly, remedial for any student who has been through the secondary school system. Since the O99 students have failed to reach an acceptable level following a conventional syllabus, the need to consider an alternative approach is evident (cf. Wilkins, p.74).

The duration of the O99 course is one semester of 15 weeks and the level of intensity 5 x 50 minutes per week. Classes are usually small, seldom exceeding 10 students.

2. Aims

O99 students are characterised by a lack of confidence in using the language and/or by an inability to distinguish forms to express quite basic meanings or distinctions of meaning. Their needs are therefore:-

1. to develop confidence in using the language
2. to develop a reasonable standard of accuracy in the selection of appropriate grammatical forms; to achieve this, the range of such forms (not meanings) will necessarily be very limited.

I emphasise the word "selection" because few of the forms will be new to the students. However, before efficient selection can be achieved, some unlearning may be necessary. The employment of ungrammatical forms like *I have went, *I am go, *I going, etc., reveal the muddle an ungifted student gets into when no relation is established between meaning and structure.

3. Mode & Medium

In O99 we give priority to the spoken medium ('using' the language by the way, does not refer only to production). A good deal of time would no doubt be spent on teacher-student communication, not only to develop confidence in general but also to enable the student to work efficiently with the teacher in the target language. Parts 2 & 3 of the model are partly concerned with the (modal and functional) communications that are useful for this purpose. Grammatical syllabuses are inherently weak in this regard. They cannot incorporate communicative functions into the syllabus in a comprehensive manner, or show the relation between those functions and the language as a whole, or exploit the communicative potential of the classroom situation.

III. THE MODEL

1. The summary is laid out in 4 columns. There are three reasons for listing the exponents (Col. 2) of a given notion or function: the first is to provide an accurate description of what actual utterances students should be able to produce.¹ Given the requirement of authentic language in a syllabus of this kind, one would no doubt expose students to language which goes outside these limits but in the productive mode we are basically concerned with a survival kit: the second reason is for ease of testing; the third is theoretical: to show that a notional/functional design does not involve an ungrammatical free-for-all in the classroom but, on the contrary, the language can be tightly controlled. In the context of this particular course, such control will probably be necessary.

In theory, there is almost no limit to the amount of possible cross-reference (Col. 3). I have cross-referenced only in the interests of clarity or to highlight relationships that may require course designer's special attention. Examples (Col. 4), also, have been provided for the sake of clarity or to highlight what might otherwise be missed.

2. The summary is in 4 parts: the first 3 parts follow Wilkins (1976) and I have headed them using the same terminology. I have preferred his term 'semantico-grammatical' to 'notional' since it expresses the close relation between meaning and grammar.

¹"The process of selection which is inevitable involved in the construction of language teaching programmes will, in the case of a notional syllabus require not only a choice of the types of meaning to be learned (and when they should be learned), but also by what linguistic forms those meanings are to be expressed." (Wilkins, p.57)

-26-

I have added a fourth category Clause Structure. This is not of course a semantic category and, in fact, the data presented is retrievable elsewhere. However, it is perhaps pedagogically useful to be able to see at a glance the structural limits of the desired communicative competence.

3. The actual categories and sub-categories also lean heavily on Wilkins but I have formulated quite a lot of my own and, once or twice, I have mixed. Part 3 in particular is rather different. On Reference I have followed Halliday & Hasan (1976) except for (rather doubtfully) adding indefinite pronouns.
4. My interpretation of the term Structure also follows Halliday (e.g. 1961) and is by no means equivalent in meaning to 'grammar'. The term adjunct is an element of clause structure in systemic grammar, as developed by Halliday and others.

Two final words: first, this summary is intended as a working document, not as a model of descriptive linguistics and practical considerations have been given priority over linguistic finesse; secondly, its purpose is exemplary; it is not in actual use, though a more primitive version does form part of our statement of behavioural objectives.

REFERENCES

- HALLIDAY, M.A.K (1961), 'Categories in the
theory of grammar', Word 17
- HALLIDAY, M.A.K & HASAN, R (1976) Cohesion in
English (Longman)
- WILKINS, D.A. (1976) Notional Syllabuses (OUP)

PART 1 SEMANTICO - GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES

	Category	Exponents	Cross-Reference	Examples
1.	TIME			
1.1	<u>Time Relations</u>			
1.1:1	In Relation to the moment of utterance			
1.1.1.1.	No time indicated	Present Simple		I like coffee
2	Past	Past Simple		
3	Future	1. Going to + V 2. Present Continuous		
1.2	<u>Duration</u>			
1.2.1.	In the past	For/How Long? Numerals 1-100 Minutes, Hours, Weeks, Months, Years	1.1.1.2 above	
1.2.2.	In the future	Going to + V + as for 1.2.1		I'm going to stay in London for 2 weeks
1.2.3.	In the present (Progressive)	Present Continuous	Pt 3, 1.2.	In the first picture, Janet's having breakfast.

PART 1 SEMANTICO - GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES

	Category	Exponents	Cross-Reference	Examples
1.3	<u>Point in time</u>			
1.3.1.	In the past	WHEN? ON/IN/AT/BEFORE/AFTER Clock Time Days of week, months Calendar Time Ordinals 1st - 31st YESTERDAY, LAST (e.g. week)	1.1.1.2 above	I didn't smoke last year...but
1.3.2.	in the future	As above where appropriate + Tomorrow The day after Tomorrow Next (e.g. week) In a Minute	1.1.1.3	
1.3.3.	in the present	Now Present Simple		... I do now
1.4	<u>Frequency</u>			
1.4.1	Frequentative event (or habitual)			
1.4.2	in relation to the present	Present simple		
1.4.3	Scale of frequency	Always/Often/Sometimes/Never	Pt. 4, 12.5	

- 29 -
PART 1 SEMANTICO - GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES

	Category	Exponents	Cross-Reference	Examples
1.5	<u>Sequence</u>			
1.5.1	Adjectival	First through Fourth		
1.5.2	Adverbial	First ... Then ... And then... After that		
2.	QUANTITY			
2.1.	<u>Divided Reference</u>	Plural forms of nouns: Regular formation Irregular : Men, Women		
2.2	<u>Undivided Reference</u>	Article		Coffee vs. A coffee
2.3.	<u>Quantifiers</u>	Some, A lot (of) Any, How Much/Many?	Pt 1, 9	
2.4	<u>Numeration</u>	Numerals 1 - 100 as part of nominal group		two expensive hotels
3.	SPACE			
3.1	<u>Location</u>	Prepositional Group AT/IN/NEAR/NEXT TO UNDER/OVER/BEHIND/IN FRONT OF OUTSIDE/BETWEEN		
3.2	<u>Motion</u>	Prepositional Group WHERE? TO/FROM/ON/IN/INTO/UP/DOWN		

	Category	Exponents	Cross-Reference	Examples
4.	PREDICATION, ATTRIBUTION MODIFICATION \			
4.1	<u>Predication</u>	Equational sentences BE	Pt 4, 1.1	The film was interesting Miss Snow is a dancer
4.2	Attribution	Adjective in Nominal Group))	Pt. 3, 1.2	
4.3	<u>Modification</u>	Adverb as adjunct. ?))		
5.	SENTENTIAL RELATIONS			
5.1	<u>Agent/Object/Beneficiary</u>	Not listed		Lend me your book. He gave some money to the clerk
6.	REFERENCE			
6.1	<u>Personal</u>	1. Personal pronouns) a) Subject) b) Object) c) Possessive) d) Sentential form) 2. Nominal+ 's (possessive case"))	Pt. 1, 7.3	"Would you answer this question ?" "Me ?"
6.2	Demonstrative: Near Far	This/These Here Now) That/Those There Then)		
6.3	<u>Comparative</u>	One... The other More/Less Else Like		It costs you more/less in August. What else ? A house like this.

	Category	Exponents	Cross-Reference	Examples
6.4	<u>Clause substitution</u>	so		I think so.
6.5	<u>Nominal substitution</u>	One		Give me the red one.
6.6.	Indefinite (exophoric)	Someone, Something.		Someone's coming. Who?
7.	CONCORD		Pt. 4	Pt. 4
		1. Subject. verb		
		2. Question - Response	pt. 1, 6	Are those your suitcases ?
		3. Referent : to preceding text : to following text		
8.	INTENSIFICATION	Very		
9.	NEGATION	See. examples		No Not on Thursday I'm not well. No, I don't. He doesn't like pizza. Why doesn't he like pizza?

PART 2 CATEGORIES OF MODAL MEANING

	Category	Exponents	Cross-Reference	Examples
1.	(Scale of) OBLIGATION	HAVE TO (+V)		
2.	ABILITY	CAN		Can you see into that room?
3.	(Scale of) CERTAINTY	I THINK (+ clause) PROBABLY I'M SURE (+ clause) DEFINITELY I KNOW (+ clause)		
4.	DOUBT	I DON'T THINK (+ clause) I DON'T KNOW (as response)		

PART 3 CATEGORIES OF COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION

	Category	Exponents	Cross-Reference	Examples
1.	GIVING INFORMATION		Pt 4, 2.1	
1.1	<u>Stating</u>		Pt 1.4.1	I'm a student at Kuwait University, My father owns a garage
1.2	<u>Describing</u>		Pt 1 1.2.3 4.2, 4.3	There was blood on the floor and two broken glasses near the door
1.3	<u>Narrating</u>		Pt 1, 1.5.2	
1.4	<u>Explaining (casual)</u>	WHY/BECAUSE		
1.5	<u>Linking</u>			
1.5.1	Additive	AND TOO		
	Contrastive	BUT		
1.5.3	Alternative	OR		
1.5.4	Casual	BECAUSE		
1.5.5	Sequentive		Pt 1, 1.5.2	
2.	SEEKING INFORMATION		Pt 4, 2.2	
2.1	<u>Questions</u>	Interrogative mood		
2.1.1	Polar (Yes/No)			
2.1.2	Notionally specific (Wh-)	WHO, WHAT, WHICH, WHY, WHEN WHERE, HOW, HOW MUCH/MANY/LONG, WHAT KIND OF		
2.2	<u>Response</u>			
2.2.1	to polar questions	YES/NO + AUX	Pt 4, 2.4	last year to the station
2.2.2	to Wh- Questions	Moodless clause		

PART 3 CATEGORIES OF COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTION

	Category	Exponents	Cross-Reference	Examples
3.	COMMANDING, REQUESTING (Scale of politeness)	Imperative mood Imperative mood + PLEASE I'D LIKE (e.g. a steak) HAVE YOU GOT (e.g. a light) WOULD YOU..... ?	Pt 4, 2.3	
4.	PERMISSION			
4.1	<u>Seeking Permission</u>	CAN I.....? DO YOU MIND IF I.....? EXCUSE ME		
4.2	<u>Compliance</u>	CERTAINLY, ALL RIGHT, OF COURSE		
4.3	<u>Refusal</u>	NO, YOU CAN'T I'M AFRAID NOT		
	AGREEMENT & DISAGREEMENT			
5.1	<u>Agreement</u>	YES, I AGREE, THAT'S RIGHT, OF COURSE		
5.2	<u>Disagreement</u>	I DON'T AGREE, NO, THAT'S WRONG		
6.	THANKING	THANKS, THANK YOU		
6.1.	<u>Initiator</u>	THANKS, THANK YOU		
6.2	<u>Responder</u>	THAT'S ALL RIGHT		
7.	GREETINGS			
7.1	<u>Everyday</u>	HELLO HOW ARE YOU? FINE, THANKS		
7.2	<u>Introductory</u>	HOW DO YOU DO? PLEASED TO MEET YOU		

PART 4 CLAUSE STRUCTURE

	CLAUSE TYPE & STRUCTURE	EXPONENTS	CROSS REFERENCE	EXAMPLES
1.	BY SENTENCE TYPE			
1.1	<u>Equational sentences</u>			
1.1.1	Subject-BE-Complement	Complement 1. adj 2. nominal	Pt 1, 4.1	
1.1.2	Subject-BE-Adjunct			
1.1.3	THERE-BE-Subject-Adjunct			
1.2	<u>Other sentences</u>			
1.2.1	Subject-Verb-Object			
1.2.2	Subject-Verb-Adjunct			
1.2.3	SV(O) Time adjunct-Place adjunct			
1.2.4	SV-Indirect Object-Direct Object			
1.2.5	S-Adverb-V-(O)-(A)			
2.	MOOD			
2.1	<u>Declarative mood</u>	unmarked		
2.2	<u>Interrogative mood</u>	<u>Verbal group</u>		
2.2.1	equational sentences	Inversion		
2.2.2	other sentences	Preposed Do or Inversion		
2.3	<u>Imperative mood</u>	Ø subject		
2.4	<u>Moodless</u>		Pt 1, 2.2.2	

THE USE OF STUDENT LECTURES IN AN ESP WRITING COURSE

BY MAUREEN O'BRIEN
ELU - ENGINEERING

Student-delivered lectures have been a part of both the College of Engineering ELU's non-credit courses for several years. What follows is a brief description of how student lectures in the five-hour non-credit writing course (English 099) are used to develop students' researching, outlining, organizing, note-taking, and writing skills.

In the 099 course, the primary purpose of student lectures is not to give students the opportunity to use spoken English in a real situation, but to give them the opportunity to use written English in a real situation.¹ This is reflected in the grading of the lecture. Only 30% of an 099 student's lecture grade is allotted to the actual delivery of the lecture, and of this 30%, only 10 is allotted to such features of spoken language as clarity, pace, pronunciation, etc. The remaining 20% of this percentage of the grade is allotted to logical organization of information and effective use of visuals (diagrams, models, realia). The remaining 70% of the grade is allotted to various aspects of written English, which will be discussed below. In addition, in-class writing assignments are based on individual lectures, and a final test, covering the subject matter of all of the lectures, is given when all of the students have delivered their lectures.

¹Earl Stevick's (1971) distinction between "real" and "realistic" language applies, I think, to the student lecture, which involves both. Stevick gives this explanation: "I really use the question 'What time is it?' only if (a) I don't know what time it is and (b) I want to know what time it is. I can use the same question realistically if I can foresee the time when I might really use it." (29-30)

In the explanation of the 099 student lecture program which follows, it will be seen that the lecture is actually a means towards an end -- or, more correctly, several ends.

Preparation for Student Lectures

(Begun when the semester is approximately two-thirds over)

1. Model lecture

- a. The teacher delivers a model lecture and students fill in the outline which is provided. The outline contains the following headings:
Definition, Main Parts, Principle(s) of Operation, Operation.
- b. The teacher passes out a model outline, filled in. The outline is discussed, in terms of form (numbering, indenting, etc.) and content. The students compare their outlines to the model.
- c. The students follow the model outline to write an essay. This essay requires them to do the following, all of which are taught in the 099 course: classify, define, describe (in terms of shape, dimensions, properties, location), generalize, and describe a process.
- d. The teacher passes out a model essay. This essay is discussed in terms of how it follows the outline, and what language is used (e.g. present tense, sequence connectives in process description, etc.)

2. Extraction of information from written material (A)

- a. The students are given information on the fluorescent lamp, taken from the book,
How It Works. They work in groups to use this information to fill in the outline which they are given (following the format of 1a, above).
- b. The teacher passes out a model outline, filled in. The outline is discussed, as in 1b, above, and the student outlines are checked.
- c. The students use either their own completed outline (if it has been approved by the teacher) or the model outline to write an essay.
- d. The teacher passes out a model essay. This essay is discussed as in 1d, above. The students compare their essays to the model.

3. Extraction of information from written material (B)

- a. The students are given information on fuses and circuit breakers from How It Works. They extract information on the cartridge fuse from this, and fill in the outline which is provided.
- b. The teacher passes out a model outline, filled in. The outline is discussed, and the student outlines are checked.
- c. The students use either their own or the model outline to write an essay, which is passed in for a grade.

4. Lecture information given to the students

- a. Division of the class into pairs, and explanation of tasks for each pair of students (researching the topic, extracting relevant information, outlining, essay-writing, delivering the lecture). Each member of a pair of students receives the same grade for the outline, the essay, and the lecture, even though only one student actually delivers the lecture. If a student prefers to work alone, he or she may do so.

- 39 -
- b. List of suggested topics (Other topics are acceptable, as long as they require the students to perform the functions given in 1c, under 'Model lecture'.)
 - c. Sample grading sheet
 - d. Schedule, made up by each teacher for his or her own class, of when students must pass in the name of their topic, their source(s), their outline, and their essay; and of when each lecture is to be delivered.

5. Writing of outlines and essays

- a. The students are taken to the library and given a brief explanation of the reference books available to them (primarily encyclopaedia), and of how to use these books.
- b. The students choose a topic, research it in the library, and photocopy the information which they find.
- c. The students work in class to prepare an outline of their lecture, and to write an essay following the outline. These two tasks should take from two to three class periods.

At this point, the differences between the lecture and the essay are pointed out to the students. Although the information and the organization are the same, the essay must be clearly understood by the reader (i.e. the teacher) solely through the language used, while the lecture is supplemented with visuals. Therefore, information which may be conveyed visually by the lecturer must be expressed verbally in the essay. In addition, the lecture may be interrupted for clarification by the listeners, while the reader cannot stop and ask for clarification. Finally, features of rather informal spoken language (e.g. contractions, "Now I'll show you how it works", etc.) are not a part of formal written language.

Delivery and Follow-Up of Student Lectures

Each student lecturer must do the following:

1. Follow the prescribed outline
2. Make effective use of visuals to clarify what he or she is saying
3. Speak loudly, clearly, and correctly

While listening to a lecture, each member of the class must take notes on what is being said. The notes are in the form of an outline whose four headings correspond to those in the lecturer's outline. These notes are collected at the end of each lecture so that students do not memorize their notes. At intervals during the lecture period (of approximately three weeks), the notes on individual lectures are returned to the students and are used to answer such questions as "What is a pressure cooker made of? Why?" "Write a formal definition of a fluorescent lamp". "Describe the first stage in the operation of a bicycle pump". The notes are then passed in again. When all of the students have delivered their lectures, all of the notes are returned to the students. The students use these notes to take a test on the lectures. The test questions (at least one question on each lecture) are similar to the examples given above.

References

Keen, Martin L. How It Works. London: The Hamlyn Publishing Group Ltd., 1973.

Stevick, Earl W. Adapting and Writing Language Lessons. Washington, D.C.: Foreign Service Institute, 1971.

ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES, ASTON 1980

BY ANDREW E. SEYMOUR

MSSD, FACULTY OF MEDICINE

1. Details of the Course

A course in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), organised by the British Council, was held at the University of Aston's James Gracie Conference Centre in Birmingham from 6th to 25th July 1980. The course was designed for experienced teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and its main aim was to develop professional competence in the planning, writing and teaching of English as a Foreign Language materials for specific purposes.

The Director of Studies was John Swales, Senior Lecturer in English as a Foreign Language at the Language Studies Unit of the University of Aston in Birmingham. Course tutors were Meriel and Tom Bloor of the Aston Language Studies Unit, James Crofts, Director of the Language Studies Unit at the University of Khartoum in the Sudan, Jonathan Elliman of the Faculty of Engineering English Language Unit at the University of Kuwait, and Jennifer Jarvis of the Overseas Education Unit at the University of Leeds. Specialist lectures were given by Professor Dennis Ager of Aston University's Department of Modern Languages, Chris Beedham, David Charles and Ray Williams of the Language Studies Unit at Aston, Vijay Bhatia, a Ph.D. student at Aston, David Blackie, ESP editor of Thomas Nelson publishers, and Tim Johns of the Department of English at the University of Birmingham.

The course was particularly useful in providing an opportunity for experienced EFL teachers in many different countries to exchange ideas and expertise. The fifty course participants came from Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Finland, German Democratic Republic, Greece, Iraq, Kuwait, Mexico, Poland, Spain, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, and

Yugoslavia. Most of these teachers were natives of the countries where they taught, the only exceptions being the four Britons teaching in Greece and Kuwait.

For the first two weeks of the course the daily programme began at 9 o'clock with a lecture given by one of the course tutors. The rest of the morning was taken up with group tutorials at which a tutor and about ten course participants discussed the theme of the preceding lecture in relation to their own particular experience and work situations. In the early part of the afternoon there was either a further tutorial or a practical workshop at which small groups of participants worked on a project. In the later part of the afternoon there was sometimes a forum where groups reported back and compared notes with other groups. Occasionally the afternoon was left free and a specialist lecture given in the evening. In the final week the course was restructured into a number of two-day modules so that course participants could select a range of activities that accommodated their individual interests and circumstances. These modules included the general areas of Materials Writing, ESP Teaching, Integrated Course Design, Testing in ESP, Organisation and Administration of ESP Courses, Teacher Training in ESP, and Research in ESP.

Because of the well-known problems teachers face in trying to obtain access to relevant ESP work, an effort has been made at Aston to assemble an "ESP Archive" of papers, published and unpublished, and draft materials. These and a wide range of textbooks were available at the conference centre and course participants were able to delve into the materials in the free moments. All participants were asked to look at one or more of the following ESP textbooks in some detail:

1. Susan Holden (ed.) English for Specific Purposes
Modern English Publications, 1977
2. R. Mackay & A. Mountford (eds.) English for Specific Purposes
Longman, London 1978
3. Pauline Robinson ESP (English for Specific Purposes)
Pergamon Press, Oxford 1980

Much of the benefit to be gained from this course derived from the informal person-to-person exchange of ideas and expertise, the practical work in small groups, and the individual research undertaken in the archives. These benefits cannot adequately be described in an article such as this. However, the academic content of some of the lectures summarised below may give an idea of the areas covered during the three weeks.

2. ESP : Whys and Wherefores

In his opening lecture John Swales made some general comments on the nature of ESP. He noted the importance of English in secondary schools around the world, the spread of English as an international language of communication, the use of English as a library and research language, and the fact that English is a language of knowledge and culture. If English is taught as an end in itself then it is not ESP, for in teaching ESP we first have to ask what might be good for our students. English can be of general value to non-native speakers and it can also be of specific value: it may be restricted to the need to master certain specific skills only. Mr. Swales preferred the S in ESP to stand for 'specific' rather than 'special' since the level of specialisation is left open, and the word 'special' implies that there is a distinction between general English and special English. He pointed out that all language is in fact used for specific purposes. In ESP we first study the environment in which the language is to be used and then move from the specific purposes to the English required, from the SP to the E.

How do we move from the SP to the E? Mr. Swales explained what he considered to be the orthodox position, that is to say that firstly we look at purposes or needs, secondly we consider language, and thirdly we select learning activities. He quoted Roger Bowers of the British

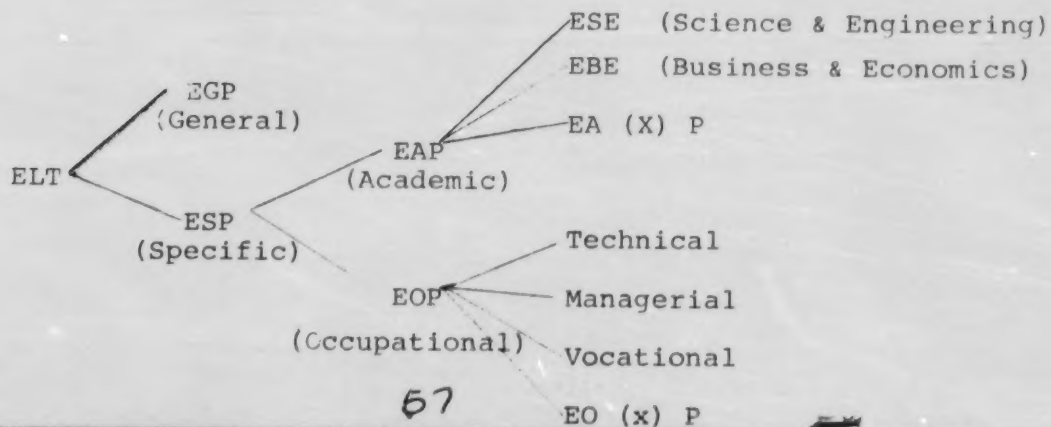
Council as a typical exponent of the orthodox position:

"If we define the 'specific purpose' for which it is valuable to study English in a given context, can we then define the language use which needs to be taught and can we decide how best those elements can be taught?

We therefore have three tasks: to define the purposes, to describe the language use which fulfils these purposes, and to decide the strategies which will allow learning to take place most effectively and most economically."

This process of moving from needs to language activities provides a theoretical underpinning for ESP courses: by first ascertaining the needs of the students, the language taught can be made more relevant thus increasing motivation and leading to a higher rate of achievement and learner satisfaction. At the practical level the process is a bridge-building exercise: we select what we will teach and we narrow down the field. This kind of thinking has provided the ideas for ESP teaching in many service units and is now making its way into school work as well as university and higher institute work where it has been used for some time. It is often the thinking behind the teaching of study skills.

John Swales next summarised the main types of ESP in the following way:



English for Academic Purposes can be either pre-study or in-study and it can be either independent or integrated. English for Occupational Purposes can be pre-experience, simultaneous, or post-experience. Thus a student of medicine might study English prior to beginning the study of medicine or at the same time as he is studying medicine, and his English course might be independent of his studies in medicine or it might be integrated with the academic subject. A pilot might study English before practising his profession, or he might learn English at the same time as he is learning his job, or he might have already flown for many hours before he begins his study of English.

Mr. Swales pointed out that although those who held the orthodox view moved from needs to language to activities in their ESP course design it was in fact possible to plan these three stages in any order. Some teachers might wish to plan activities before deciding on the language to be taught. Others place far more emphasis on the language, deciding on the linguistic content first and then moving on to needs or activities. More recently there have been those who wish to start with the activities or strategies and then move on to the needs and the language required. Thus, we can identify three different approaches to ESP course design.

The language-based approach flowered in the early 1970s during the textbook explosion inspired by the field of Applied Linguistics and research in the area of text and discourse analysis. The work of Halliday, Crystal and Davy was quoted in this respect. The basis of courses was 'confutational' (Swales' word for concepts, functions and notions) and the methodology was based on presentation, practice and production. John Swales was still very much in favour of such language-based courses.

The needs-based approach has flowered over the past five or six years during the project explosion inspired by the field of curriculum studies and research in the area of needs-analysis. Because Applied Linguistics was not always in touch with the reality of the classroom there was a move away from textbooks towards projects. The basis of courses

was cognitive and the methodology often included team-teaching, with English teachers linking up with scientists, media experts, etc. The work of John Munby, Roger Bowers and others at the British Council has been of great importance in this development.

John Swales concluded his opening lecture by looking into the future and wondering if the early eighties would see an emphasis on activity-based course design in which the actual activities are considered to be more important than the specifying of needs. Such emphasis is inspired by behaviour research in the area of how learners learn. Mr. Swales mentioned some of the research being carried out at Lancaster University, particularly that of Hutchinson and Waters.

3. Teacher Education in ESP

Ray Williams spoke about the problems facing the teacher transferring from more general English teaching to ESP. He considered ESP to be very much a tertiary level activity and identified the major problem as being the re-education of teachers. Five points were touched on.

The first problem faced by a teacher moving into ESP is a threat to one's confidence. Most ESP teachers are from an arts / humanities background and most ESP teaching is in scientific and technological fields. Students are very quick to spot a lack of confidence in the teacher's handling of scientific subjects.

The second problem is a conceptual one concerning the teacher's attitudes to the students' specialist subjects. What is needed is a sympathetic understanding of the concepts and problems of the subject area and a broad-based interested knowledge. The ESP teacher has to build bridges into the students' world. However, not everything in the syllabus is necessarily relevant to ESP.

The third problem concerns the teacher's attitude to the English to be taught. The very dogmatic attitudes often held among English teachers have to be cast aside. Mr. Williams considered that specialised lexis is often a much greater problem for the ESP teacher than it is for the students. A new order of priorities is required and ESP teachers need to learn a lot more about the language in relation to the specialist subject of the students.

The fourth problem is in the area of methodology. Established methods of teaching English have to be challenged and often altered when a teacher moves into ESP. However, Mr. Williams thought that too much was made of the differences between different teaching methods.

The last problem concerned the non-teaching side of ESP. Teachers moving into ESP often find themselves spending a great deal of their time on non-teaching matters. They are concerned with job and study analyses, curriculum development, visual aids, contact with staff in specialist areas, and many other educational areas, and some teachers find it difficult to move away from the classroom for so much of the time.

4. Analysing Needs

Meriel Bloor discussed the reasons for analysing the needs of our students, looked at some of the models of needs analysis which are available, and mentioned some of the problems faced when we try the analysis for ourselves.

Before giving her own reasons for needs analysis Mrs. Bloor first identified the "weak position", typified by MacKay, that it is merely one useful tool among many others for the course designer, and the "strong position", typified by Munby, that a prior analysis of the needs of the students is absolutely essential to course design. Her own view was that by analysing the needs of the students we can overcome many of the problems of motivation and give face validity to our courses. We thus overcome the resentment felt by students who feel that all the language

they are taught must have some direct use. Needs analysis also enables us to establish our priorities and thus make more efficient use of our time and materials. It is in fact the basis for establishing the aims of any course.

Mrs. Bloor next took a brief look at some of the models of needs analysis which are available to ESP course designers. She wondered whether these models were systems to be followed, as the originators claim, or were rather merely a description of what teachers intuitively do. She identified two groups of needs analysts, those who concentrate on the learner and those who concentrate on the target. The first model looked at was that of Richterick and Chancerel (in Identifying the needs of adults learning a foreign language, Council for Cultural Cooperation of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1978). She suggested that this model was target centred and that the target itself was looked at from the four angles of activities, functions, situations and skills, all of which overlap. The second model considered was that of John Munby as portrayed in his book Communicative Syllabus Design (CUP, 1978). This is the most extensive and detailed analysis available and Mrs. Bloor made available copies of some of its parts but left discussion to the tutorial groups. The third model considered was a recent one described by Hutchinson and Waters which Mrs. Bloor considered to be a target centred analysis.

Finally, Meriel Bloor mentioned some of the problems faced when we attempt a needs analysis. Firstly, it is very difficult to find a good way of establishing what the real needs of our students are; questionnaires are extremely difficult to make up and have severe drawbacks. Secondly, we need to find out group characteristics, the needs the students have in common. Munby considers the needs of the individual but Mrs. Bloor felt we should consider group needs. Thirdly, needs analysis is an ongoing process and we have to take account of the fact that needs can change from day to day. Fourthly, the needs of students are not always identical with what the students actually WANT. Students often want to learn things which a needs analysis finds they do not need. Lastly, there are usually a whole

host of practical constraints on the course designer. Mrs. Bloor felt that the Munby model did not take account of these constraints and she also felt that this model contained a great deal of duplication of information. She ended by questioning whether it was always practical to teach in the classroom what was actually needed. Mrs. Bloor then left discussion of the models she had mentioned to the tutorial groups.

5. Functional Analysis

Jennifer Jarvis considered functional analysis of language to be a useful addition to a teacher's armoury of weapons. It is good to link language to human processes, and functional analysis leads to more motivating and graspable teaching.

Ms. Jarvis looked at functions as meaning, referring to some of the work of Halliday in the field. She examined Halliday's interpersonal, ideational and textual meta-functions and took cohesive devices as a specific example for more detailed analysis. She then looked at functions as speech acts, referring to the work of Searle in this area, taking the acts of promising and apologising as specific examples and wondering how we recognise these things in language. Some of the work of Van Ek and others in the Council of Europe projects was also mentioned. Ms. Jarvis doubted that forms were in fact generalisable across situations and hinted that more examination of the situations in which these specific speech acts take place was necessary. She felt that the Council of Europe work linked only functions and forms without taking specific situations into account. She referred listeners to Ronald White's "Functional English". Finally, Ms. Jarvis looked at the discourse analysts, notably Trimble, Sinclair and Coulthard. She considered that the identification of functions used in a text was valuable and looked at some specific examples.

In conclusion, Ms. Jarvis warned that discourse analysis and any kind of functional analysis cannot be some kind of miracle cure for ESP. There is too much generalising of

functions from one situation to another. So often we read that instructions use the imperative whereas analysis of texts produced during this lecture did not use the imperative when issuing instructions. Ms. Jarvis posed the following three questions for discussion.

- a) If, there is always a relationship between function, situation and form when is it safe to generalise from one use of a function to another?
- b) Can and should we try to make our students 'in-group' members of a SP group (that is, with a command of the full range of the group)?
- c) Are communicative functions universal across languages?

These points were taken up in discussion groups.

6. Aims of Grammar teaching

James Crofts considered the main aims of teaching grammar to be correctness, completeness, communication, confidence and coherence.. However, for many teachers and course writers correctness appears to be the only aim. Some textbooks try to be complete but Mr. Crofts questioned the need to stress redundant factors in grammar teaching. There are many grammatical errors which do not in fact hinder communication and more time should be spent on errors which do interfere with communication. He mentioned the phrasebook approach to grammar which was not a total system at all. Mr. Crofts also felt that there was not enough emphasis on reception in grammar teaching despite the natural greater ability to receive rather than produce. Too many teachers spent all of the time available teaching students to produce grammatical speech or writing. Mr. Crofts considered the main difference between teaching ESP and teaching more general English to be external motivation and purpose of the students. He suggested that the interests of the participants should be combined with careful and explicit use of language.

7. Definitions

John Swales attempted to relate all of the content of previous lectures, discussions and tutorials on the course to a specific task, that of dealing with definitions in ESP. He first gave two warnings. Teachers often think they know too much intuitively and so do not look at the problem they are dealing with. We may have half-remembered ideas from dictionaries or textbooks about definitions involving terms + class + characteristics. The second warning was to beware of EST distortion. Since most research seems to be done in EST there is a danger of thinking that the results of this research in scientific English must also apply in other fields. But are definitions the same in the legal, business or medical fields?

Mr. Swales then showed participants on the course some typical definitions and suggested that definitions are pegs from which garments can be hung. The garments may consist of examples, descriptions of main parts, indications of variations, descriptions of use or even argument and controversy (persuasive definitions). In writing we can teach persuasive definitions but in preparation of reading materials it is more problematic. We should remember that when passages are selected they are out of context. Comprehension depends very much on previous knowledge. Simplification of a passage often entails lengthening it in order to make explanations.

From a brief glance at various definitions it was concluded that they often occur in undergraduate textbooks, they are often used to explain new terms and they differ in function in different academic subjects. For example, in law there are explanatory definitions which are similar to scientific definitions, though in law many alternatives are given, but there are also substantive definitions which constitute the law itself. In the latter no deviation is possible and such a definition cannot be arrived at by the individual. In the Social Sciences definitions are used with much greater freedom than elsewhere; your definition of wealth is a reflection of your views on wealth. Sometimes many definitions are discussed in order to arrive at a better definition in the end.

64

John Swales concluded by suggesting some ways in which definitions can be taught in the classroom and these were then discussed in groups. We can teach by using matching tables, or by giving notes that have to be made into definitions, or by giving separate sentences which have to be joined or by giving the beginning of the definition which has to be completed. All of these methods concern single sentence definition. A fifth method was mentioned in discussion, that of correcting and improving definitions already given.

Mr. Swales was of the opinion that before we can teach such a basic thing as definition writing we need to have done a needs analysis of our students, examined varieties of language, carried out a functional analysis of texts, and worked on the grammar in them.

Included in the texts for discussion were some examination questions from scientific subjects and some examples of definitions in textbooks on engineering, law and economics. A chart was drawn up comparing scientific, law (explanatory), law (substantive) and economics definitions in respect of their status, typical position, function, content and typical exponents.

8. Improving listening skills

Jonathan Elliman suggested the study of David Wilkins' Notional Syllabuses (OUP, 1976) on the selection of learning items, Lawrence's Writing as a thinking process (Michigan, 1972) on information transfer, and Ronald White's Listening comprehension and Note-taking (MET 6) on the production of listening materials.

After some theoretical background on aspects of a communicative event Mr. Elliman spoke about decisions which have to be made in materials writing. First, we consider the study subject; in his example it was engineering. Next, we look at the language skills to be taught; these are interwoven with the necessary study skills. In his example, the language skill was listening

and the specific study skills were note-taking and the use of diagrams. The materials writer next looks at the function (e.g. definition; process). Then, it is necessary to consider the form which the language takes (e.g. verb 'to be', item + class; present passive). Finally, the writer chooses a topic; in the example given it was 'The Tap'. It was stressed that this process of decision making was NOT a needs analysis; that had already been carried out previously. These areas have been selected on the basis of what the needs analysis showed up. It was Mr. Elliman's view that function was the most significant area to the materials writer, but each step in the process throws up certain problems. For example, how do we choose the topic and how do we make sure the materials are authentic? Mr. Elliman suggested that the topic would be subject-like, in his example he would choose an engineering-like topic rather than attempt to teach pure engineering.

Mr. Elliman offered the following advice to would-be designers of communicative language teaching materials. Make sure that all the language taught is presented as discourse. Remember that analysis comes before synthesis. Try to design the materials to include all the skills which are to be taught; the aim is integrated language skills. Focus your attention on function and form. Use information diagrams and study skills activities; these can guide the learner in his analysis and can provide non-linguistic representation.

Mr. Elliman next indicated the stages which he suggested for producing a recorded text. First, obtain or write your text. Next, analyse the text for teaching items. Thirdly, prepare a work sheet. Throw away the original text and record from cues on the worksheet; do not just read the written text. The next stage is to transcribe your recording. Then you rewrite the transcription to improve it. Finally, record your polished transcription.

The rest of the talk consisted of Mr. Elliman demonstrating how he teaches his listening comprehension lesson on The Tap. Course participants became language

students for a while. The lesson, developed in the Faculty of Engineering, University of Kuwait, worked very well and led to a useful discussion on the integration of skills within a lesson and other points that Mr. Elliman had demonstrated.

9. Teaching Reading

Jennifer Jarvis considered that when reading a text we need to use our knowledge of the world, the language and the text. We use our knowledge of the world to predict what is likely, to ask questions of the text and to make references from hints. We use our knowledge of language in relation to sentence structure and word collocation. We use our knowledge of the text in relation to its functions and their organisation, the cohesion devices and the relationship between visual and verbal. The teaching of reading must be linked to all three forms of knowledge, but how?

Ms. Jarvis used a passage from a motor vehicle mechanics textbook as an example to study. She suggested that good teaching would use the students' previous knowledge and that it is a good idea for the teacher to use another text which the students do not have. When there is a diagram, as there was in her example, it is a good idea to get the students to label it: this involves them in thinking about the topic. After the labelling of the diagram it is a good idea to give the students some questions which make them think more about the topic. Moving on to use of the students' knowledge of language, the teacher can give completion exercises which are designed to illustrate sequence. Another good technique is the use of jumbled notes and incomplete tables which have to be completed. Some writing exercises can be given based on the table. Matching exercises should be devised to practise awareness of cohesive devices. Ms. Jarvis then went on to a more detailed text analysis, including work on collocations, words of movement in the text, and prepositions. Finally, she suggested ways of helping students answer exam-type questions.

10. Vocabulary - a case of neglect

John Swales, in a paper on vocabulary teaching, said that the 'New Wave' materials, such as the FOCUS series on Reading and Planning, stress the need for students to understand the overall shape of the discourse. They also concentrate on Reference, words like it, them and this receiving a great deal of attention.

The traditional comprehension class with the teacher playing the role of self-propelled dictionary has been severely criticised for locking all the students into the same reading speed and into reading habits, for failing to develop multiple strategies for coping with 'new words', and for encouraging the teacher to concentrate on minor linguistic points rather than on the main message of interest. As a result, vocabulary teaching and learning has become unfashionable. John Swales suggested that we thus treat ESP students as "linguistically-gifted idiots" who are supposed to know all meanings of words and tenses in a text (and are thus very gifted) but whose attention is continually drawn to such facts as that the first sentence in a text is an introductory statement. However, it is known that a relatively small percentage of lexical unknowns reduces reading to frustration level especially if the text is not fully signposted or as clearly structured as it might be. (Swales referred to the influential work of Hosenfield).

One solution to this problem is to try and separate vocabulary building and development from the actual reading process by pre-reading work, interspersed vocabulary work within reading and post-preliminary reading. Whatever the patterns arrived at for vocabulary building in relation to skills development, it seems clear that the vocabulary material should be structured effectively so that it can be better acquired and better retained, and it should be consolidated within the appropriate skills without too long a delay.

The possibilities for structuring vocabulary material in teaching include listing, semantic groupings, operational sequences (e.g. wet-wash-rinse-dry), and trees. We can also use oppositions (boil:freeze - heat:cool), cognates with non-cognates and many other structured forms.

In group work, course participants were asked by John Swales to assume that various groups of students would need to consolidate their vocabulary in the area of verbs dealing with liquids. One group considered words which would be relevant to civil engineers (who are concerned with dams, water supplies, etc.). Another group considered the needs of chemistry students when doing experiments. A third group looked at verbs dealing with liquids which would be important to medical technicians, a fourth group concerned itself with the vocabulary of cooking and fifth group tried to help marine navigators. Each group first made a list of all verbs that came to mind which seemed relevant to their students' speciality. Then, these verbs were put into some kind of pattern or order to establish potentially appropriate types of structuring. This work established a basis for checking out the actual data, establishing priorities (i.e. grading), assembling exercise possibilities, and finally writing some actual teaching materials.

11. Varieties of English - Legal English

In an earlier lecture Meriel Bloor had spoken about the different varieties and registers of English. She had questioned whether we can in fact be specific about what constitutes a certain variety or register of language and had looked at some of the research in the field, quoting Ronald White on the need for more research before conclusions can be drawn. In his talk on legal English, Vijay Bhatia pointed out that there is no one variety of English that we can identify clearly as legal English. His research had indicated that we have to be far more specific. He had been looking at court-room English, the language of legal documents, and the language of law textbooks. These were three quite different varieties of English.

In the court-room the setting is unique. Usually, there are only two parties interacting and much of the speech takes the form of questions and answers. The rules of language in this situation, where there are often many people but very little multi-party interaction, are at variance with the usual rules of conversation. Student lawyers are instructed never to lose control over a witness in court but in their textbooks they are given no indication as to how to use language in such a way as to achieve their ends. Similarly, law students are given very little help in the writing of legal documents even though the language employed must be of a certain kind and no deviation is possible. The language of the court-room is being studied by Vijay Bhatia, and he also drew attention to the work of Atkinson and Drew in this field.

In studying written legal texts we have to distinguish between the language of law textbooks, that of casebooks and that of legal documents. Vijay Bhatia is engaged in the detailed examination and analysis of legal documents in terms of subject, length, types of clause, lack of pronominal references and many other linguistic points. He suggested that the most useful area of research for the ESP teacher in this field was the study of the functions of particular forms of language. He took his audience through an analysis of some samples of laws where the language is the law itself. The writer of the law has to allow for all kinds of eventuality and his aim is the creation of a model which includes every eventuality in a precise way. Vijay Bhatia showed how phrases such as 'in accordance with', 'in pursuance of', and 'by virtue of' often appear to be interchangeable, but his detailed study had shown that they rarely are. Each phrase is used only in certain specific situations. He pointed out that such differences would not be found in a grammar book but they are useful to the ESP teacher of lawyers and law students. Another example which he examined in some detail was the difference between 'with a view to' and 'for the purpose of'. He warned ESP teachers against asking lawyers

the difference and relying on their answers. What is needed is a detailed analysis by linguists of hundreds of these usages in texts. The choice of correct prepositions in legal documents is a field for a great deal of research and it is up to experienced linguists to carry it out. Vijay Bhatia showed his audience how to take legal texts and analyse the language systematically.

12. Teaching advanced writing

John Swales explained the difficulties involved in teaching a writing course to students at Aston University. He was concerned to teach project-writing since this was considered necessary by both students and staff. He would prefer to use something like the Box Kites project which is used in Kuwait University and is described by Jim Herbolich in an article in the ESP newsletter No.29 (Oregon State University), copies of which were distributed. However, there were many practical constraints which prevented the use of such brilliantly designed projects being used at Aston.

John Swales listed the negative factors which he had to take into consideration when planning his writing course. His students received 20 lessons, each lasting an hour and at weekly intervals. Lessons were entirely voluntary and were held in the lunch-hour on Wednesdays. There was a very wide range in the level of English in the class and the number of students attending could range from 20 to 50, a floating population with a hard core who always attended. The students were from a variety of specialisation but were predominantly students of engineering or management science. Some were undergraduates, some were studying for MSc and others were PhD thesis writers. There was a wide range of academic competence. Most of the students want to be taught and seen to be taught; they are very concerned with the subject matter of the course.

John Swales and Tony Dudley-Evans were devising a course which they both actually taught, Swales at Aston and Dudley-Evans at Birmingham University. It was a team effort and the course could be revised in the light of their

experiences in teaching it. Because of the above restraints they had decided not to teach a remedial course concerned with grammatical errors. The teacher was very much up-front telling the students what to do. The subject matter was mainly to do with either engineering or management (alternating). Each lesson was designed to last 55 minutes and was self-contained because of the floating population of the classes. The course was not graded in any way, since experience had shown that starting with easy materials resulted in the loss of those students (mainly from Africa and Europe) who considered it beneath them. However, within each lesson there were various levels of difficulty. The students were given strict guidelines on how to write a project or term paper or thesis. The various parts of the project were not taught in the order they appear in the final copy. First, students are shown how to plan the whole thing. They then concentrate on method before going on to the discussion. The introduction is looked at last.

First, a modified simple report, a simple hypothesis, is given to the students. The method section is omitted, and instead an oral account of it is given, the students working in pairs to convert what they hear into the appropriate written form. The discussion part of the work is reached in about the fourth week. It is this section which often causes the most problems, especially the way in which we make reservations rather than state everything as fact. Students work on the interpretation of tables and the ordering and reordering of sentences. The aim is coherent writing rather than grammatically correct but inappropriate writing. Students are taught prescriptively some of the formulaic and fancy language which is expected in formal thesis writing. They are given transformation exercises here. In teaching about introducing a subject students are shown the importance of narrowing the field of writing and putting their subject in the context of the whole, wider field. There is often a problem of vocabulary and students often repeat the same verbs or expressions many times, so work is done on alternative ways of saying the same thing. Later students work on abstracts of

research and are shown how to summarise the research which they have looked at and link it to their own. Mr. Swales gave some of his materials to his audience and took them through parts of them.

Discussion followed on how prescriptive a teacher can be when teaching writing and on many other aspects of Swales' talk. What had been said about team-teaching was elaborated by T.F. Johns in a talk he gave on team-teaching in Birmingham, with particular reference to lecture comprehension. Interested readers should look at the writings of Johns and Dudley-Evans.

13. Acknowledgements

This summary of the academic content of some of the lectures is not complete and may give the impression that the course was very theoretical. It should be remembered that much of the time was spent not in lectures but in group work discussing the practical applications of these issues and in the actual production of materials which participants could use in their own particular situation.

I would like to end this article with an expression of thanks, both to the organisers and lecturers of the Aston ESP course, and to Dr. Abdul Mohsin Yousef Abdul Razak, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Kuwait, who so generously provided me with the funds necessary for my participation on the course.

MULTI-PURPOSE TEXTS FOR ADVANCED STUDENTS OF BUSINESS STUDIES

BY CATRIONA ROBERTS
ELU - COMMERCE

At the English Language Unit (ELU) Commerce, of Kuwait University, a number of elective (200 level) courses are offered which rely heavily on content since they reflect subjects in which the students are majoring. Students sign up for the courses having already completed 3 semesters of general English or through advanced placement which indicates a relatively high level of aptitude.

English for Marketing (202) is one such course. Part of the course aims at teaching the language and basic concepts of consumer marketing with a view to applying them within the real world of commerce. For this transfer from the theory to the practical, various published articles were tried out which, it was felt, might generate the students' application of these concepts to real case studies.

Students tend to be particularly responsive to materials that are presented to them as published articles from magazines and newspapers, i.e. when it is clear that the text has not been adapted for their use. Such materials are often a great restorer of flagging spirits and wilting motivation.

Although, at the outset, material was selected merely for extensive reading purposes, certain articles came to be used as stimuli for controlled discussion and expository written follow-up. However, success was dependent on careful selection, preparation and exploitation by the teacher.

Selection

After a period of trial and error, using a variety of commerce-oriented magazines, both local and international, by far the best source for these purposes seemed to be International Management, a McGraw-Hill publication. The magazine is aimed at directors and senior executives of major industrial, commercial, governmental and financial undertakings and therefore covers an extremely wide range of subjects, apart from marketing. This magazine was selected for a number of reasons, mainly that the English was not too idiomatic or full of technical jargon and also because each article tended to be a factual case study, rather than a theoretical treatise. The latter was particularly important because factual case studies were more appropriate for scanning purposes - a key technique in the exploitation of the material. In recent months, such topics as: 'the Marketing techniques which have contributed to ABBA's success in the pop industry', 'Avon's breakthrough in the Japanese cosmetic market', 'Holiday Inn's success in the International Hotel Industry' and 'the Growth of Universal Franchise', have been dealt with.

Preparation

Having selected an article, the facts and ideas which were considered important to the comprehension of the article as a whole were underlined. These would constitute the answers to the scanning questions. Furthermore, it was pointed out that anyone having difficulty should consult with his teacher, prior to the scheduled lesson for which they were preparing. This was important since the scanning technique within these assignments was to be used as a means to an end, not as an end itself. Furthermore, once the technique had been established, the scanning questions became more demanding. Questions were prepared that required more than one fact for a single answer. This was indicated in the questions, e.g.

"How does Holiday Inn ensure that their managers do not throw away unfavourable reports from customers?"

(2 reasons)

(assignment 3)

"How can a country benefit from importing a franchise?"

(3 reasons)

(assignment 4)

The students, then, were presented with the article and the questions as a package and were given a date (usually 2 weeks hence) by which time they should have prepared the material.

The following extract is an example of the type of reading that the students have been required to deal with. It represents about one eighth of the article as a whole and the parts underlined represent the answers to the scanning question which follow.

The extract

A hotel which scores poorly in customer satisfaction is certain to attract more than usual attention from the company's inspection squads. A well run hotel can expect a visit about once every nine months. A poorly managed hotel can expect an immediate inspection after two consecutive bad returns and regular subsequent visits from the inspectors until it is up to standard.

Holiday Inns has about 20 inspectors. "I check in as an ordinary guest and assess the service in the lobby, restaurants and so on," says inspector Marvin Jortner. "Then next morning I make my presence known and conduct the formal part of the inspection."

With the help of the Holiday Inns book of standards, a massive volume that specifies everything from the temperature of the water in the showers to the size of the bed and the state of wear of the carpets, he makes a thorough inspection of at least 12 rooms. "I always look at it from the point of view of the guest," explains Jortner. "Would he want to come back? Sometimes I walk into a room and know immediately I wouldn't want to sleep there."

The inspectors work with the local hotel manager and the local district manager to plan programmes to bring deficient hotels up to standard. This can frequently be an expensive business.

(Taken from, 'Rooms with a view to value' by David Clutterbuck.

International Management, page 60,
November 1979.)

The scanning questions

How often can a well-run hotel expect a visit from an inspector?

What happens to a poorly-managed hotel?

How many inspectors do Holiday Inn employ?

What does an inspector usually do when he first arrives?

What does he do next day?

What does he use to help him carry out his inspection?

What is the minimum number of rooms that a Holiday Inn inspector looks at?

From what angle does he view each room?

Whom does he work with in order to upgrade deficient hotels?

Exploitation

The aim was to get students involved in informal groups which could lead to both oral and written verification of their comprehension of the article.

A class of 16 students is somewhat large for formal class discussion to be effective, so each article was divided into as many topic sections as it comfortably allowed. The Holiday Inn article easily lent itself to 8 sections, of which the above-quoted part on the function of their inspectors was one. The other topics were as follows:

Holiday Inn's place in the international hotel industry.

Consumer research by Holiday Inn.

Improvements in the European sector.

The function of 'test kitchens'.

The operational management system.

The loss prevention programme.

Managerial training programmes.

Having divided an article into such topic-sections, the class was then divided into a corresponding number of

groups - in this case, pairs. Following that, the teacher wrote one of the 8 topic headings on 8 different cards, followed by a reference to the appropriate scanning questions....

202/Holiday Inn assignment

Group 3

THE FUNCTION OF HOLIDAY INN'S

INSPECTORS.

(scanning Qs. 15 - 23)

Then the names of one pair of students was written on the back of each of the cards. This, then, was the preparation for the first part of the lesson - the discussion work-shops.

Although the teacher decided on the initial grouping (pairing) herself in order to avoid undesirable combinations, the students were told to decide, themselves, which of the group (pair) would give the lecture on the first occasion. However, it was further pointed out that the other student(s) would take over on the following assignments.

1. Discussion work-shops

What followed in the classroom was informal, yet controlled, discussion. Each pair (or group) of students was given one card, with instructions to prepare for a mini-lecture that would take place within 15 to 20 minutes and which either one of them would be required to produce. Prior to the lesson, students had no idea which aspect of the article they would be responsible for.

While they worked together, referring to the scanning questions as prompts, the teacher moved round

the room from group to group, helping where necessary. In fact, most of the students seemed to require very little assistance and there was virtually no problem with their speaking Arabic. Some of them chose to make notes or headings, at this stage, to facilitate their forthcoming oral presentations. Others, who had prepared themselves exceptionally well prior to the lesson, did not find this necessary. At this stage it was pointed out that the scanning questions, referred to on the card, were to be considered as a guide to the minimum factual content of their mini-lectures; they were naturally free to elaborate if they wished. In this way, the weaker brethren came to regard the card as a clearly defined yet attainable goal, while the super-stars regarded it merely as a catalyst.

The students were given the following advice as to how they should conduct their discussions. Following a brief perusal of the text and questions referred to on the card, each student in turn asked the questions, while the other answered. Following this, the student who had decided to give the mini-lecture rehearsed what he or she intended to say, while the other listened, prompting and correcting where necessary. They were advised to do this so that the good students, when paired with a weaker member of the class, would be able to function in the group in an actively helpful manner, even when he or she was not to give the lecture.

2. The mini-lectures

On average, the students were given about 15 to 20 minutes in their discussion groups to prepare for the mini-lectures. Then in turn, a student from each group came to the front of the class and spoke on the subject specified on his or her particular card. The lectures were presented in sequence, according to the article, so that there was a logical progression through the material, making a composite whole. Meanwhile, the rest of the students listened closely, asking questions for elaboration or clarification and even disagreeing at times, knowing

that in the final analysis, they would be expected to write on at least 3 of the subjects.

Most students managed very well. However, there was one instance where one of the girls was too nervous to speak when her turn came. She simply froze. When this happened the rest of the class was told to help her out by asking the scanning questions that applied to her section of the article. In this way she was able to perform perfectly well and demonstrated her knowledge of that section.

One alternative procedure at this stage would be to record the students as they deliver their mini-lectures. These taped recordings could be used for a variety of purposes - simply for students to listen to their own work in a critical manner, regarding factual content as well as structure. Obviously, only the most glaring structural errors were corrected during their lectures since continual interruptions can have a detrimental effect on self confidence. On the other hand, such recordings could be used for aural comprehension with a completely different group of students. This would be somewhat dependent on quality of course, both linguistic, factual and technical. The possibility of live video recordings, is also being considered.

3. Written follow-up

The written follow-up was done both in class and out. Preference was given to the former, simply because control was guaranteed. However, when this aspect was assigned as homework, students were prevented from copying out chunks of the text by having their copies of the article collected in (but not the accompanying scanning questions) when the homework was assigned at the end of the lesson. In some ways, this procedure proved to be an added incentive both to their preparation of the article (extensive reading) and to their participation in the mini-lectures. In anticipation of the removal of the text, some students took notes while listening to the oral

presentations. It is clearly not difficult to ensure that students do not rely too heavily on the text during this phase if it is carried out in the classroom.

An interesting side issue of collecting in the assignments was to see how different students had handled their extensive reading. A few copies were plastered in Arabic (the weaker students), while others were neatly underlined with the number of the scanning questions noted in the margin. One especially able student had used a thick, felt-tipped pen and had blocked out the facts which answered the questions.

Students were usually given a choice of 3 out of 6 questions, the aim of which was to get them involved in some expository writing and, as far as was possible, to apply previously-learned marketing concepts to related facts. This was the follow-up question pertaining to Holiday Inn's Inspectors:

'HOLIDAY INN'S INSPECTORS PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN MAINTAINING STANDARDS AND SATISFYING CONSUMER NEEDS.' EXPLAIN.

Here, the major premise, 'the satisfaction of consumer needs' for which and towards which all marketing policies should be directed, was to be applied to a job description of Holiday Inn's inspectors. Here are 2 examples of students' work:

Student A

Holiday Inn's inspections play an important part in maintaining standards and satisfying consumer needs.

A well-run hotel can expect a visit every 6 months from an inspector, while a poorly managed one can expect an immediate visit after 2 consecutive bad returns and other regular subsequent visits till it becomes up to standards.

Holiday Inn employs 20 inspectors, the inspector visits the hotel as an ordinary guest, he checks the service in the lobby, restaurants etc. on the first day, then the second day he makes his presence known and he forms the formal part of the inspection. To aid him carry out his duty, he uses the Holiday Inn's book of standards, which has a standard for every thing from the temperature of the water in the showers, the size of the bed, to the state of wear of the carpets.

At least 12 rooms are visited, the inspector looks at the room from the guest's point of view, he imagines himself a customer, and asks himself if he wants to sleep in that room or to come back to it again.

In order to up-grade deficient hotels, the inspector has to work with the local hotel manager and the local district manager. It costs 500,000 dollars to up-grade a hotel.

Student B

The manager of the HI hotel expect to have at least one visit every nine months from an inspector. When the inspector enters the hotel he first check as an ordinary guest all the services given to the customer. Next morning he present himself and conduct his formal part of inspection. The inspector ^{uses} the book of standards of HI, to help him carry out his inspection, which clarify everything from the temperature of the water, size of beds - tell the state of the carpet. The inspector ^{daily} check at 12 rooms in the hotel from the point of view of the guest. Then he writes a report that specify if the hotel maintain the standards and if it satisfies consumer needs.

Bearing in mind that the students were relying on their memory of class activities as well as the scanning questions and any notes they took during the mini-lectures, the results were generally quite pleasing.

Student A has clearly followed the scanning questions very carefully and has managed extremely well both in terms of content and structure. Student B, on the other hand, probably took fewer notes during the mini-lecture but has managed fairly well in terms of content, if not structure! However, he has applied the all-important concept of consumer satisfaction to his answer.

It must be pointed out that neither of these students prepared this particular topic in their discussion groups for the mini-lecture. Needless to say, students write very well on the topics that they have also been responsible for the class. In this case, examples have been quoted which illustrate what they are capable of producing as a result of both their reading and their relatively passive participation in the oral aspect of the lesson.

Variations

Finally, a suggestion as to how the assignments could be presented in a different manner, involving different activities.

An article of similar length and content to the one above could be divided into larger units, i.e. 4 instead of 8, whereby the section on Holiday Inn Inspectors would be combined with the one on Consumer Research. Each section should be duplicated for the students in sections, so that each quarter could be given to a different group of students from the start.

Prior to the lesson, the teacher should have divided the class into 4 groups. Then, as before, the assignment should have been given to the students a week or so before the lesson, only this time they would receive their part of

the text only and without any scanning questions. The lack of such questions is feasible since the students would be responsible at this stage for their section only. For his part, the teacher should prepare note-taking sheets (headings) which the students would work from during the discussion work-shops.

An out-line sheet relating to Holiday Inn Inspectors could provide the following prompts:

Holiday Inn's Inspectors

1. Frequency of visits
2. Number of inspectors
3. Checking routine -
 - a) Day one
 - b) Day two
4. Follow-up

At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher would give a copy of the out-line sheet, relating to the appropriate section, to each student in that group.

Therefore, students A, B, C and D in group 1 would each receive a copy of sheet I, and so on. This group's discussion, then, would revolve around the out-line on sheet I, and at the same time, would provide a basis for the imminent mini-lecture.

<u>OUTLINE SHEETS</u>	<u>STUDENTS</u>	<u>GROUPS</u>
I	A B C D	1
II	E F G H	2
III	I J K L	3
IV	M N O P	4

Having prepared, in their groups, for the mini-lectures, the rest of the class should then be given copies of the other groups' outline sheets. Hence, students in group 1 would receive sheets II, III and IV, and so on.

Then, one student from each group (to be rotated for subsequent assignments) would present each mini-lecture. Meanwhile, the other students would elaborate on the outlines by taking notes while they listened. Anything they missed or did not understand could be clarified or repeated by asking questions of the lecturer/student. Consequently, by the end of the aural/oral session, each student should have acquired 4 sheets of notes - one during his discussion group, on the subject he prepared at home, and the other three from listening to the other students' lectures.

As a written follow-up, students could be asked to write up their notes in the form of simple reports or the teacher could have previously prepared 4 expository questions as described above.

In conclusion, it is hoped that teachers who experiment with any of these procedures will provide further suggestions as to how they could be improved, and in addition, that those who have already developed different techniques for dealing with commercially published texts will divulge their secrets!

CREATING AN ITEM BANK

By VICTOR MASON
TESTS & MEASUREMENT OFFICE

Abstract

Kuwait University Language Center may be atypical of most foreign-Language programs worldwide in having a system in place and operating for the acquisition of baseline data essential 1) for the evaluation of test results and 2) for the application of the analysis of those results to the development of new test-forms. An essential component of such a system is the item bank of objective test items, which serves several vital functions, most importantly: 1) providing an empirical means of assuring and upgrading quality of major examinations, and 2) saving teachers an enormous amount of time in the development of new test forms. The paper, therefore, describes how an item bank may be developed and provides suggestions about how it may be effectively employed.

- 74 -

Creating an Item Bank

I. Introduction

A. The Need for Feedback from Major Achievement Tests

1. Every semester of every academic year, thousands of educational institutions worldwide that offer instruction in foreign languages prepare, administer and mark the final exam papers of millions of students. Yet, for all of the expenditure of time and effort, relatively few institutions learn much of lasting value from the results, beyond whether individual students passed their exams and courses or not.

2. Little, if anything, of empirical value is retained to benefit the ongoing instructional program in two important areas of assessment: (1) performance of the students as a group, relative to similar groups; and (2) performance of the test (a) for individual items relative to one another, (b) for test parts relative to one another and (c) as a test, relative to similar tests. A key reason that this information is not available to many instructional programs is a widespread lack of familiarity among foreign-language teachers with techniques for the collection, organization and evaluation of baseline data obtained from major common exams, especially course achievement examinations such as final exams.*

3. The fact that a model for the handling of such data exists at Kuwait University Language Center (KULC) for the development of norming and placement tests administered in the language units is due to the efforts of Dr. Donald J. Malcolm, former head of the Language Center's Tests and

* Dr. G. Richard Tucker, Director of the Center for Applied Linguistics in the United States, strongly urged KULC staff interested in doing basic research to begin obtaining such data as a prerequisite to meaningful program evaluation.

Measurement Office. Past and present unit testing representatives (UTRs) from each of those units have had the unusual professional opportunity of learning what they know about the handling of baseline information as a direct consequence of Dr. Malcolm's efforts in developing a testing program of professional quality during his years with KULC. Basic to those efforts was the creation of a bank of quality items for the construction of appropriate Language Center placement tests.

B. The Development of Objective Test Items

4. In recent decades, the growth of objective testing in the field of foreign languages, as in so many other pedagogical disciplines, has been a consequence of the need for tests which both are valid in content and can produce reliable results. One of the most widely used formats in testing foreign-language skills objectively is the multiple-choice (MC) technique, which has proved itself especially useful for the assessment of proficiency in the receptive macro-skill areas of reading and listening, as well as for the major components of grammar and vocabulary.

5. The MC technique has a major drawback, however: the MC item is a deceptively difficult item-type to produce in all foreign-language skill areas, but particularly for testing the integrative skills. As Oller says (22), "tests of the multiple-choice sort are extremely difficult to prepare." He adds that "the most difficult aspect of (MC) testing is test construction," although he comments that another possible problem area is interpretation of discrete-point test results (*ibid.*, 23).

6. The key to producing good MC items is the observance of all steps of a time-consuming process of proper test-development: careful writing, adequate pretesting, conscientious review and revision, and further pretesting, review and revision. Guidelines for this MC test-development process can be found in the KULC Test Development Manual.

Guidelines for the preparation of test parts employing this format as well as others can be found also in such excellent published sources as Harris, especially for programs teaching English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP); and Carroll, especially for curricula emphasizing the communicative approach to teaching and testing, as in most programs teaching English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP).

C. The Importance of an Item Bank

7. No matter how linguistically and methodologically sound a test may be, however, it will remain a one-time phenomenon, without permanent value for a program, unless a well-organized system is created for analyzing the effectiveness of the test, of its parts and of its items and for then recording the results of the analysis. Only in this way can that which has been learned be applied to the development of future test-forms designed to fulfill measurement objectives similar to those of their predecessors. This is one of the main purposes of creating an item bank: to keep those items which have, in the past, demonstrated their effectiveness---and to discard or modify those which have not.

8. Once an item or a test section with associated items (as in reading and listening comprehension) has consistently proven its usefulness in measuring language skills at a particular course level, it becomes a valuable part of the item bank. As an item bank fills, semester after semester, with ever more items and sections which are effective, the more it fulfills a second major purpose: saving the teachers of a course enormous amounts of time in constructing new achievement tests, and not forcing them to repeat the test-development process from scratch every semester without knowing the degree to which past efforts met their basic measurement objectives.

9. Such a system serves a third program value of considerable importance: to have enough items in a bank to make re-use of the same items and sections unnecessary

more than once every several semesters. The arduousness of the test-development process often leads a committee or individual responsible for a new test form to simply try to re-use the same items and sections for tests in consecutive semesters. When done a few times for final exams of the same course, the word gets around among students and then this practice can seriously compromise test security---and is unfair to students not privy to the same information as their more fortunate friends. Such a practice may have undesirable "backwash" effects on student attitudes during the course, particularly when a final counts as much as 40 or 50 per cent of its total weight, as is the case at educational institutions in many nations.

II. Creation of an Item Bank

A. Linguistic vs. Statistical Considerations in Analysis of Objective Test Items

10. All discussion that follows assumes that all of the basic steps (mentioned in paragraph 6 above) which are requisite to producing linguistically and methodologically sound MC items are rigorously followed. It never assumes 1) that statistical analysis can supplant linguistic analysis in assuring quality control of objective items or 2) that creation of an item bank places greater emphasis on statistical than on linguistic analysis to assure the quality of items. A program with sensitive and able staff lacking the ability to determine statistical characteristics of items and test parts can very well produce consistently good achievement tests, while the most up-to-date computer technology can never compensate for a staff weak in the understanding of applied linguistics and of sound testing methodology. The item bank simply gives greater assurance of quality over time and also saves a good staff a lot more time for class-related duties, thereby decreasing the burden of test development.

70

B. KULC's Item Bank for Development
of Placement Tests

11. KULC staff, however, have been fortunate not only in having had a former director of their testing program who could introduce them to the advantages of item banks and of rudimentary statistical analysis of test results. The Language Center has, unlike most foreign-language programs worldwide, the free services of a sophisticated computer center, which has during the past several years done an enormous amount of work analyzing the results of Language Center placement and norming tests. With the assistance of the Kuwait University Computer Center, the Tests and Measurement Office built up a large file of items from the units, a file which has been indispensable in the production of 100 per cent objective, two-hour placement tests with reliabilities consistently above 0.90.

C. Calculation of Item Statistics

12. The two criteria of item effectiveness which are most important in an item bank are those for 1) relative item difficulty and 2) correlation with the sub-total for the portion of the exam of which an item is a part. These criteria can be calculated "by hand" for any class quiz or test. But as the number of students and/or test items increases, the task can quickly become inordinately time-consuming. One approach to the efficient calculation of item statistics is to get class participation, as recommended by Diederich (whose discussion of the subject is available in large quantities in the T&M Office for interested KULC staff).

1. the "high-low" method of calculating
item statistics

13. A rapid method for calculating item difficulty and discrimination power for class quizzes and small tests taken by relatively few students is the "high-low" method advanced by Diederich, involving preparation of a table

like that below, which has been reprinted from Downie (215). (It is important to note that the larger the number of students responding to an item, the more reliable the analysis will be and therefore the more valuable for long-term use.)

Fig. 1: Item-Analysis Work Sheet

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<u>Item</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>H+L</u>	<u>H-L</u>	<u>Difficulty (%)</u>	<u>Discrimination</u>
1	18	2	20	16	56	+
2	18	18	36	0	100	0
3	12	6	18	6	50	+
4	6	12	18	-6	50	-
5	14	2	16	12	44	+
6	3	1	4	2	11	+
7	10	4	14	6	39	+
8	18	17	35	1	97	0

(etc.)

H = the number of "highs" who answered the item correctly

L = the number of "lows" who answered the item correctly

14. In this particular class, there were 37 students, whose papers were ranked in order from highest to lowest. The top 18 papers were designated the "highs" and the bottom 18, the "lows", with the one in the middle (the median paper) not involved in the analysis. Figures for only the first 8 items have been included in the table.

15. Totals for the number of students in each half of the class answering an item correctly are recorded in columns 1 and 2, respectively. The total right for an item (column 1

plus column 2) is added to give the figure in column 3, and this total is divided by the total number of students, 36, to determine the index of difficulty for the item. For example, all 18 "high" students and 2 "low" students answered item 1 correctly, so H+L for this item is 20; 20 divided by 36 gives 55.5 per cent, which, rounded off, gives a difficulty index (column 5) of .56 for item 1.

16. Column 4 indicates how well each item of this test discriminated between students in the upper and lower halves of the group. Clearly, an item's usefulness is suspect if the "better" students do not tend to get it right significantly more often than do the "weaker" students. The index here is considered to discriminate significantly (Diederich, 2) when the H-L difference is equal to 10 per cent or more of the total class, for items of "middle difficulty" (i.e., those items which between 25 and 75 per cent of the class respond to correctly; 10 per cent of 36 is 3.6, so all items on this test with an index of +4 or above were considered effective---i.e., Nos. 1, 3, 5 and 7. Very easy items or very difficult ones (answered right, respectively, by more than 80 per cent or fewer than 20 per cent of the group) are considered to discriminate adequately if their difficulty index is at least +2, as in the case of item 6.

Fig. 2: Estimates of Point-Biserial Correlation Coefficients for Items in Figure 1

Item	H (& %)	L (& %)	Point-Biserial r
1	18 (100)	2 (11)	.80
2	18 (100)	18 (100)	.00
3	12 (67)	6 (33)	.40
4	6 (33)	12 (67)	-.40
5	14 (78)	2 (11)	.69
6	3 (17)	1 (6)	.28
7	10 (56)	4 (22)	.43
8	18 (100)	17 (94)	.14

17. In figure 2 above, the totals correct on each item for the top and bottom halves of the class have been converted into percentages. With these figures, the point biserial coefficient correlation for each item can then be quickly estimated on an abac, the figure below (as reprinted from Downie and Heath, 106). On the abac, the proportion of the top half getting an item right is plotted, on the vertical axis, against the proportion of the bottom half getting it right, as plotted on the horizontal axis.

Fig. 3: The Abac

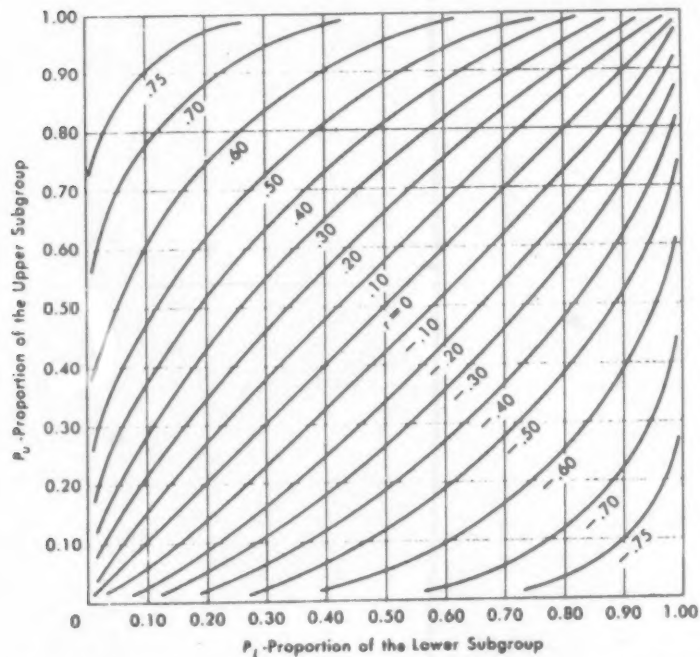


Figure 8.1 An abac for estimates of the point-biserial r when one variable is divided at the median of the distribution.

2. computerized calculation of item
statistics at KULC

18. Attempting to analyze the results of major common tests taken by large numbers of students with the above methods would be an exhausting task and is entirely unnecessary where facilities for computer-processing test results are available. At Kuwait University, where the Language Center enjoys the assistance of the computer center, the results of placement and norming tests and of final examinations are key-punched and then rapidly analyzed. With the expansion of the computer center next year, including the installation of an optical scanner, all objectively scorable Language Center tests will be able to be processed in a fraction of the time it now requires to hand-mark them.

19. In future academic years, when the complete data-processing needs of the Language Center have been determined and been fitted into the long-range work schedule of the new computer center, all major objective tests will be accommodated. Standardized answer sheets will be designed here in Kuwait according to the specifications of the language units and then produced in Britain and shipped here.

20. With computer services, the T&M Office has been able to obtain much more data on tests and items than simply the indices of difficulty and correlation for individual items. Part- and total-score means, standard deviations, reliabilities and score distributions are standard with every printout, as are the correlation coefficient matrix for all major variables and mean indices of difficulty and correlation for those variables, if objectively scored.

21. For each 4-option MC item, all of the following information is now obtained from the computer printout:

- a. the number of students attempting an item
- b. the number of students answering an item correctly
- c. the percentage of students not reaching an item
- d. the "key" (answer) for an item
- e. the number of students choosing each option of an item
- f. the average standardized scores on that part of the test for each group of students selecting each option of an item
- g. the proportion of students answering an item right
- h. the relative difficulty of each item of a part
- i. the correlation coefficient for each item

Once the printout has been analyzed for strengths and weaknesses of individual items, the data for good items are recorded. Data indicating ineffective items suggest likely sources of weakness and the need either to modify or to discard such items.

D. Item Cards and the Item Bank

22. For an item to be of value in future test-development, nearly all of the above data must be readily accessible when the item is considered for use in new test-forms. To be easily accessible, items should be typed onto standardized file cards (see the model in figure 4). The obverse of a card displays the item itself, as well as all necessary information regarding its identification: type of item, brief history of usage, unique file ID number, proficiency

level for which the item is appropriate, and the program for which it is appropriate. The reverse of the card carries the vital statistics of the item, including the history of usage on various test-forms and the essential data transferred from the computer printouts on the functioning of the item on each of those test administrations.

23. The T&M Office has a file cabinet specifically designated for all items used on KULC placement tests and norming tests. Because of their importance, these items are always kept under lock and key in the office. It is anticipated that once each of the language units of KULC begins the formation of item banks for its courses depending extensively on tests with an objective, especially MC, format, similar filing cabinets for ensuring the safe-keeping and security of their own item banks will become equally essential.

Figure 4: A Sample Item Card, Filled In

(obverse)

Gr LC PS RC Sp <u>Vo</u> Wr _____ Classification _____ _____ Prior Use _____ EA 18 PYA _____ EA 18 PZ _____ EAC 10 PYA _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	ALU <u>21-00001</u> ELU: <u>A</u> C E L S FLU _____ Course <u>132</u> (lowest for which suitable) Ali wants to sell his car so he put _____ in the newspaper. (A) a request (B) a commercial (C) an advertisement (D) an agent
---	--

(reverse)

FORM	BASE N	A	B	C	D	OMIT	N.R	P TOTAL	SCALE	AE	CRITERION
EA18PYA	200	32	27	111*	22	8	0	1.00			
	ITEM NO	M.A	M.B	M.C	M.D	M.O	M.NR	M TOTAL	P +	AO	R. BIS.
	7	47.12	42.61	53.57	46.54	46.47	--		.56	12.4	.50
FORM	BASE N	A	B	C	D	OMIT	N.R	P TOTAL	SCALE	AE	CRITERION
EA18PZ (A+B)	542	66	77	333*	57	9	0	1.00			
	ITEM NO	M.A	M.B	M.C	M.D	M.O	M.NR	M TOTAL	P +	AO	R. BIS.
	9	45.54	45.25	52.75	46.06	46.50	0		.61	11.8	.44
FORM	BASE N	A	B	C	D	OMIT	N.R	P TOTAL	SCALE	AE	CRITERION
EAC10PYA	431	69	54	236*	37	10	25	.94			
	ITEM NO	M.A	M.B	M.C	M.D	M.O	M.NR	M TOTAL	P +	AO	R. BIS.
	17	47.3	46.9	53.4	46.7	44.8	39.0		.58	12.2	.40

References

Carroll, Brendon J. Testing Communicative Performance.

Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1980.

Diederich, Paul B. Short-Cut Statistics for Teacher-Made
Tests,

Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service, 1973.

Downie, N.M. Fundamentals of Measurement. London:

Oxford University Press, 1967.

Downie, N.M. and R.W. Heath. Basic Statistical Methods.

New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974.

Harris, David P. Testing English as a Second Language.

New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1969.

Malcolm, Donald J. Test Development Manual Kuwait:

Kuwait University Language Center, 1980.

Oller, John W., Jr. "Language Testing Today".

English Teaching Forum: 3(76), 23 - 27.

Tucker, G. Richard. Comments in speech to KULC staff

and Kuwait educational officials

at the Adeliyah Campus of Kuwait

University, May 1980.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. RELC REGIONAL SEMINAR

VARIETIES OF ENGLISH AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA SINGAPORE, 20 - 24 APRIL 1981

The Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) Regional Language Centre (RELC) will hold its 16th Regional Seminar, 20 - 24 April, 1981, in Singapore. The theme of the seminar is "Varieties of English and their Implications for English Language Teaching in Southeast Asia".

The objectives of the seminar are:

To review the status and function of new varieties of English, with particular reference to Southeast Asia;

To assess the significance of psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic and pedagogic variables in relation to new varieties of English;

To review research findings in this area and to establish priorities for research;

To consider goals, methods and resources for language teaching in settings where local varieties of English exist;

To assess the effects of new varieties of English in Southeast Asian countries where English is neither first nor second language.

Abstracts are invited on topics relevant to the theme of the seminar. Further information and invitations to participate in the seminar can be obtained from the following address:

Director
(Attention: Chairman
Seminar Planning Committee)
SEAMEO Regional Language Centre
RELC Building
30 Orange Grove Road
Singapore 1025
Republic of Singapore

2. ENGLISH LANGUAGE RESEARCH JOURNAL (ELRJ)

The journal is particularly concerned with teaching, learning and research in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The term ESP is to be interpreted broadly so that a large number of practical and theoretical areas can be covered which will be of interest to those involved in ESP.

Topics include analysis of spoken and written discourse, computer text analysis, stylistics, study skills, and syllabus/materials design.

The first issue will be published in Autumn 1980 and the Journal will appear annually thereafter. Articles accepted for the first issue cover topics on programme design, specification of needs, analysis of written discourse, self-directed learning and integrative testing.

Contributions in the form of articles, reviews, research reports, and news items are invited. Further details may be obtained from the Editor:

Chris Kennedy,
English Department,
University of Birmingham,
B15 2TT

Tel: 021-472-1301 ext. 2033 (personal)
ext. 3646 (messages)

Articles appearing in this journal may be reprinted if permission to do so is obtained from the author and acknowledgement made to Al - Manakh. It would also be appreciated if two copies of the journal concerned were sent to the editor of Al-Manakh.